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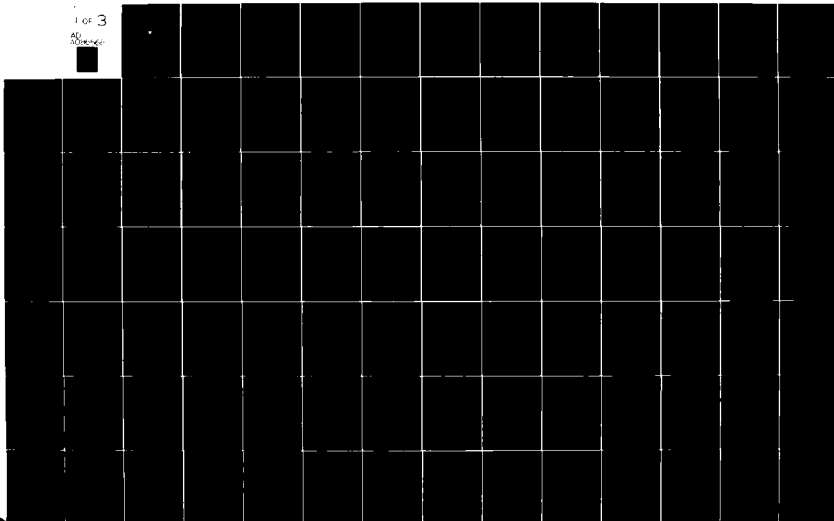
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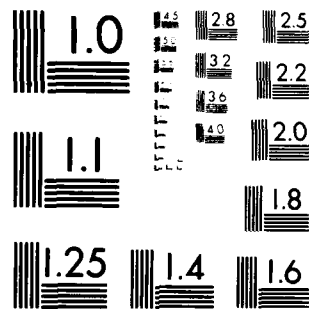
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SOVIET STRATEGY IN THE RED SEA BASIN

by

William Augustine Nurthen

March 1980

Thesis Advisor:

J. Valenta

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Soviet Strategy in the Red Sea Basin

by

William Augustine Nurthen
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
B.S., United States Naval Academy, 1970

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

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March 1980

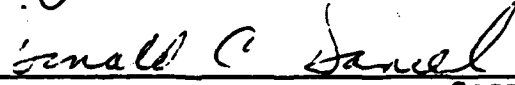
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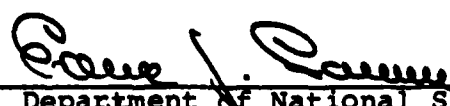
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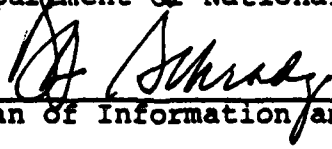
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ABSTRACT

The Red Sea basin lies within a region syllogized variously as the "arc of instability," the "crescent of crises" and the "crumbling triangle." Regardless of the metaphor utilized, this volatile cul-de-sac pulses with instability. The pattern of Soviet strategy that emerges for the Red Sea basin indicates not a grand design, but rather an attempt to manage regional instability in accordance with Russian national interests. Destabilizing events provide Moscow with targets of opportunity which are selectively exploited to achieve foreign policy goals. These goals are strategic, political and economic in nature. Naval diplomacy implemented by the maturing Soviet Navy comprises an essential and, at times, decisive element of the overall strategy for the Red Sea basin. Frequently, the Soviet military assistance program, assiduously cultivated in the region, provides the exploitive vehicle with which to capitalize on targets of opportunity generated by the persistent patterns of instability. Moscow's strategy for the Red Sea basin is supported by the major components of the Soviet bureaucracy: defense and heavy industries, armed forces, fishing and maritime fleets and ideological agencies. It is unlikely to change in the aftermath of the Brezhnev succession.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Red Sea basin, specifically the nations of Ethiopia, Somalia, North and South Yemen, lies within a broad region variously labeled as the "arc of instability," the "crescent of crisis" and the "crumbling triangle." Regardless of the syllogism preferred, the fact remains that this volatile crucible thrives on instability. In February 1977, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam staged a bloody coup and seized power from his fellow officers in revolutionary Ethiopia. By mid-July regular units of the Somali Army had launched a massive incursion into the disputed Ogaden region and liberation fighters in Eritria continued their enigmatic struggle for independence. Across the Bab el Mandeb, in June 1978, the leaders of North and South Yemen were murdered, in typically gruesome fashion, within the space of forty-eight hours. Since then, border clashes between these two nations and their mutual neighbor, Saudi Arabia, have erupted into intermittent periods of more pronounced conflict with implications for the entire Arabian Peninsula.

While the Soviet Union may not have directly precipitated these crises, they certainly have not been innocent bystanders. As Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko asserted in February 1979, "The Soviet people warmly welcome the revolutionary-democratic transformations that are being carried out in Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Southern Yemen..."¹ Moreover, in the

wake of these destabilizing events the USSR appears to have enhanced significantly its military and political presence in the Red Sea basin. Do these events and the Soviet response represent the elements of a grand design, or is Moscow capitalizing on opportunities arising in the region? In seeking an answer to this question, this study proposes the hypothesis that inherent regional instability has provided the Soviet Union with targets of opportunity which are selectively exploited to achieve strategic, economic and political goals.

The evaluation begins with a broad geographical, historical and economic overview of the nations in the lower Red Sea basin. This overview reveals various factors which both attract external actors to the region and explain why their involvement is welcomed by the nations concerned. The following section examines destabilizing events on both sides of Bab el Mandeb and extracts, from these events, the patterns of instability endemic to the area.

The next two chapters deal with the Soviet response to destabilizing events in the Red Sea basin. Chapter Three begins by outlining the USSR's strategic incentives for the region. Once these are established, two destabilizing events, or targets of opportunity, are selected for analysis. The first analysis concerns the conflict in the Horn of Africa and utilizes the rational actor and bureaucratic politics models to examine the Soviet decision to support Ethiopia over Somalia. The second analysis focuses on the target of

opportunity presented by the ouster of President Salim Robaye Ali of South Yemen in June 1978. Kremlin involvement in Ali's downfall reveals the utility of Soviet military assistance as the exploitive vehicle for destabilizing events in the Red Sea basin. Chapter Four examines the role of the Soviet naval and maritime fleets in the response to instability along the Red Sea littoral. The expanding capabilities of these elements of Russian seapower add new dimensions to the implementation of Soviet foreign policy in the region.

In the final section, results of the preceding analyses are used to evaluate the original hypothesis and to draw some conclusions concerning Soviet strategy for the Red Sea basin. Finally, an assessment of current U.S. policy for this dynamic region and an alternative to that policy is presented.

This study represents the culmination of a research effort that would have been impossible without the generous assistance of many talented people. Chief among these people is my mentor, Prof. Jiri Valenta, whose patience and guidance have been of inestimable value. Through his efforts I have been able to expand the scope of my research to important contacts in London and Washington, D.C., and with the many distinguished scholars who participated in the Postgraduate School Conference on Communist States and Africa held during July 1979. A very special note of thanks must also go to Mr. Colin Legum whose insights have been invaluable. Without

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A final note of thanks is extended to those valiant leaders of Ethiopian and Eritrean opposition movements, with whom I had the privilege to meet and interview during my research. Unfortunately, the nature of the repression they face is such that their identities must remain anonymous until a later day.

While all of the above personnel aided in the formulation of this research, the author assumes full responsibility for its content.

This work is dedicated to my wife and family whose love and support have been my source of strength.

CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES

¹Pravda (Moscow), 27 February 1979. Appearing in
Current Digest of the Soviet Press (CDSP), 21 March 1979,
p. 4.

II. THE RED SEA BASIN: GEOGRAPHIC, HISTORIC AND ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Together, Ethiopia, Somalia, North and South Yemen dominate the southern littoral of the Red Sea. Radical, irredentist, volatile and unstable are appropriate and possibly inadequate to describe the nature of these nations of the Red Sea basin. Two of these states, Ethiopia and South Yemen, are Soviet clients. Somalia, until 1977 Moscow's staunchest ally in the Horn of Africa, has shifted towards the West, and offered Washington the Soviet built naval base at Berbera as a token of its sincerity. North Yemen, the recipient of substantial American and Soviet arms in 1979, appears to be playing one superpower off against the other. Why have the nations of the Red Sea basin actively sought superpower assistance? Why has Moscow, and to a lesser extent Washington, been eager to fill their needs? This introductory chapter attempts to answer these questions by examining, in a broad sense, the history, geography and economies of these nations in the Red Sea basin. Such an overview will reveal factors that provide for a commonality of interest between these nations and the superpowers. It will also set the stage for the more detailed analyses that follow.

A. ETHIOPIA

Encompassing an area of roughly 471,000 square miles, nearly twice the size of Texas, Ethiopia is clearly the

largest of the three nations surrounding the Horn.¹ The Ethiopian topography consists of a highland complex of mountains and plateau divided by the Great Rift Valley which runs generally north to south throughout the country. The precipitous nature of the Ethiopian escarpments adds magnificence to the landscape, but makes the construction of an efficient transportation and communication network extremely difficult. The Ethiopian climate varies with elevation. A temperate climate prevails in elevations between five and eight thousand feet. Above eight-thousand feet the climate is cool; below five thousand feet a tropical and somewhat arid climate exists with temperatures averaging between 80-120 degrees F. The Ethiopian rainy season runs from mid-June to mid-September wherein rainfall averages between 2.5 in/yr on the Red Sea Coast to 160 in/yr in the Southwestern plateau.

Ethiopia's 29 million people are a heterogeneous mixture of Galla (40%), Amhara and Tigray (32%), Sidamo (9%), Shankella (6%), Somali (6%), Affar (4%) and Gurage (2%) ethnic groups.² Ninety percent of the Ethiopian people dwell in rural areas and engage in some form of agriculture. Although a 1970 language survey indicated over ninety-five languages were spoken in Ethiopia, the official language is a Semitic derivative known as Amharic. The Ethiopian Orthodox church ministers to forty percent of the population, while Islam claims another forty percent and the remainder generally adhere to

animist traditions. Only about five percent of the Ethiopian population is considered literate.

Ethiopia traces its origins to the Semitic groups from the Arabian peninsula who mixed with the local Cushtic tribes to form the ancient kingdom of Axum. The first noteworthy Ethiopian dynasty was that of Menelik I who claimed to be a descendent of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. This legendary link with the ancestor of Christ forms the basis for later claims of imperial divinity traditionally accepted by the Ethiopian people. Ethiopia was converted to Christianity in the Fourth Century A.D. However, the influx of Islam beginning in the seventh century virtually isolated the Ethiopian Christians from the rest of Byzantium. For many years the Christian Patriarch of Egypt was given dual responsibility for both Egyptian and Ethiopian Christians.

Ethiopia is unique among African nations in that it never came under colonial domination. While most of 19th century Europe was successfully carving out African empires, the Italians were thoroughly smashed by the Ethiopians in the battle of Adowa in 1895. With this victory Ethiopia asserted its independence and sovereignty which was reemphasized during the 44 year reign of Africa's archetype anti-colonial, Haile Selassie, and interrupted only briefly during the Italian occupation from 1936-1941. The British were greatly responsible for Ethiopia's liberation in 1941, and generally administered the country until 1948. The British administration was so pervasive that according to some sources Ethiopia was virtually a British protectorate.³

In mid-1974 Emperor Haile Selassie was deposed by a group of young officers who replaced the monarchy with a military Dergue. In February 1977 Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam liquidated his rivals and assumed sole control of the country. Since then the Mengistu regime has openly professed its Marxist-Lenist allegiance, and received copious amounts of Soviet and Cuban "fraternal assistance."

The Ethiopian economy is pastoral and agricultural in nature. In 1972, approximately 65% of all land was either under permanent crops or considered permanent pasture.⁴ Ethiopia's agricultural and pastoral land is so rich that, with the cooperation of nature and the aid of a few plantations, she could feed her own people and maintain food, live animals, hides, skins and seeds as her primary exports.⁵ Coffee, which grows wild in many areas of the southwestern plateau is Ethiopia's chief cash crop and major export. Ethiopia possesses rich fish resources along its 680 mile coastline virtually all of which are untapped due to a lack of indigenous demand. These resources greatly interest the Soviet Union. Ethiopia's mineral resources are largely unexplored. However, some gold, platinum and potash are believed to exist in marketable quantities. Ethiopia's industry occupies a minor position in the economy. One noteworthy industry consists of the oil refinery at Assab built with Soviet assistance in 1967. This refinery has a 500,000 ton capacity, and is staffed with approximately 100 Soviet technicians.⁶ In

1977 the Soviets extended a \$100 million credit line to Ethiopia to increase the Assab refinery capacity by 75%.

As can be seen from Table 2.1, Ethiopia's capacity to import has decreased overall between 1974 and 1977 and her Net Barter Terms of Trade have been decreasing continually since 1976. Both trends indicate that her import prices are rising much faster than her export prices. As such, the non-diversified Ethiopian economy is fighting a losing battle, and will require massive assistance to maintain even minimal growth.

Although nominally a province of Ethiopia, Eritrea has been the scene of Africa's longest and perhaps most enigmatic secessionist movement. Conquered by Moslem forces in the tenth century, Eritrea, maintains a strong Islamic population to this day. In 1936 Eritrea came under Italian control. Subsequent to liberation in 1941, Eritrea remained under British administration until linked to Ethiopia in a loose federation by a U.N. resolution in 1952. This ill-fated federation was dissolved by the Eritrean parliament in 1962 at which time the current secessionist struggle began.⁷ At the present time the Eritrean insurgents comprise three major groups: The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Eritrean Liberation Front-People's Liberation Forces (ELF-PLF). All three groups receive aid from various Arab nations, and some had received Soviet aid indirectly until the Ogaden War in 1977.⁸ The Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa are Ethiopia's only direct access

to the sea. As such it is doubtful that Ethiopia will permit the formation of an independent Eritrea. With the assistance of 1500 Soviet and 17,000-20,000 Cuban military personnel Ethiopia is currently able to contain the Eritrean insurgents who are now confined to the highland areas of the province.⁹

B. SOMALIA

At 247,000 square miles Somalia is roughly one-half the size of Ethiopia. Yet, Somalia's 1880 mile coastline is twice that of Ethiopia, and its major port, Berbera, lies "...just a few hundred miles to the west of the main shipping line from the Persian Gulf around the east coast of Africa".¹⁰ The Somali topography is dominated by flat plateau surfaces and plains. Approximately seventy-three percent of all land area is either grazing land or desert.¹¹ A majestic contrast to this bleak landscape are the east-west mountain ranges in the north of Somalia rising to an elevation of 7,900 feet at Surud Ad.¹²

Somalia's climate is continually hot and plagued with frequent droughts. The Somali town of Lugh Ferrandi has the highest mean annual temperature in the world, at 88 degrees F.¹³ Two wet seasons, April-June and October-November, account for Somalia's erratic rainfall which averages less than 20 in/yr.

Somalia's 3.3 million people are predominantly nomads and semi-nomads migrating with traditional disregard for borders in search of subsistence from a selfish land. Somalia's ethnic mix consists of Hamitic (85%) and Bantu (15%) groups

with about thirty-thousand Arabs, three-thousand Europeans and one-thousand Asians rounding out the spectrum. The annual population growth rate is 2.3%, and the literacy rate is less than 5%.¹⁴ The nation's official language, Somali, is a Cushtic derivative for which a written form was introduced in 1973. English and Italian are used in official documents, and Arabic is utilized for religious ceremonies. Ninety-eight percent of the population are Sunni Muslims.

In ancient Egyptian writings present day Somalia was known as the Land of Punt. Somalia's ancestral heritage is a mixture of Bantu ethnic groups who migrated from the south and Arabs and Persians who came from Yemen and other parts of the Arabian peninsula. Early Somalis formed clans based on their primary means of subsistence, nomad or settler. These clans, existing even today, form the basis of much internal conflict.

In the 19th century Somalia came under the colonial domination of the British in the northwest and the Italians in the east and south. In 1935 the Italians utilized Italian Somaliland as a base from which to invade Ethiopia and later British Somaliland. In 1941 Britain regained all of Somalia and from 1945-1949 administered the country in the name of an Allied Powers Commission. In 1949 the U.N. General Assembly entrusted former Italian Somaliland to Italy under the proviso that Italy would prepare the territory for independence by 1960. In the summer of 1960 both British and Italian Somaliland became independent, and merged to form the Republic of Somalia.

Subsequent to independence Somalia has been plagued with internal conflict based on clan affiliation. On October 15, 1969, President Shermarke was assassinated by a member of a rival clan who claimed revenge for previous injustice. Six days later disgruntled army officers, led by Gen. Mohammad Siad Barre, seized control of the government. To date, Siad Barre has survived three known coup attempts (1970, 1971, 1978). The number of unpublished attempts is probably much higher.

The Somali flag contains a five pointed star which typifies the irredentism for which Somalia has been scored by the majority of African nations. Only two of the star's points pertain to land areas now within Somali's borders. The remaining three signify Somalia's claim to Djibouti, the Ogaden of Ethiopia and the Northern Frontier District in Kenya.

Somalia's longstanding rivalry with Ethiopia, over the Ogaden derives from a desire to protect and preserve the herding patterns of Somalia's nomads. This rivalry erupted into violence in the summer of 1977. Despite initial success by the Somali insurgents, Ethiopia, with massive Soviet and Cuban support, was able to recapture most of the Ogaden by the spring of 1978.

With about 70% of the population living at the subsistence level and a per capita gross domestic product of roughly \$80, Somalia ranks as one of the world's poorest lesser developed countries. The 1974 drought further aggravated Somalia's desperate economic position causing a loss of

approximately 1.0 million cattle and 5.7 million sheep and goats. Additionally, the drought forced many unskilled nomads into the cities contributing to massive unemployment. Somalia's primary exports are bananas, livestock, hides and skins. As shown in Table 2.2, Somalia's import revenue generally has been rising faster than her export revenue, indicating a declining capacity to import goods and services required for economic diversification and development.

A U.N. survey concluded in 1974 found Somalia's coastal waters "rich in a variety of exploitable species". This fact coupled with a lack of indigenous demand for fish attracted the Soviet fishing industry which in 1975, obtained exclusive fishing rights from Somalia in return for \$60 million in aid.¹⁵

The extent of Somalia's mineral deposits is unknown. Various quantities of diverse minerals have been found throughout the country; however, mining of these minerals has not been given high priority. In December 1977, the Soviet Union reported that "Somalia is the site of the world's largest uranium mines..."¹⁶ This report could not be corroborated, and is most likely false. However, it does reflect the Soviet Union's interest in Somalia's potential uranium reserves.

Somalia's three major ports - Berbera, Mogadishu and Kismayo - have undergone modernization in recent years. Deepwater facilities at Berbera in the north and Kismayo in the far south were provided by the Soviet Union and the United States respectively, while the Common Market and the International Development Association financed similar improvements in Mogadishu.

C. YEMEN

1. North Yemen

Across the Bab el Mandeb lies the land termed by the Greeks as Arabia Felix (Happy Arabia). The foreboding landscape and inhospitable climate of Yemen's eastern shore run counter to this engaging Hellenic toponum. Ancient upsurges in the earth's crust displaced the Arabian Peninsula vertically and horizontally, in an eastward direction. This movement titled the Arabian massif and produced the Great Rift Valley, part of which includes the Red Sea basin. In the 75,000 square miles which comprise North Yemen, the resultant landscape rises sharply from the Red Sea coast into a highland complex which gradually subsides into the barren Rub al Khali (Empty Quarter) of Saudi Arabia and the lowlands of South Yemen's Hadramaut Valley. The narrow coastal strip, known as the Tihama, engages 260 miles of Red Sea littoral from Salif, in the north, to the ancient coffee entrepot of Mocha in the south. Temperatures in this region exceed 130°F and are accompanied by a humidity ranging from 50 to 70%. The rainfall in this semi-desert region occurs in irregular downpours and rarely exceeds 5 inches per year.¹⁷

The highlands of North Yemen's interior contrast sharply with the arid Tihama. Volcanic eruptions through the earth's fissures have produced a complex of plateau and mountains which reach their apex at the 12,337 foot peak of Nabi Shuyab near Sana'a. Depending on elevation the climate within this region can be termed "the best in all Arabia".¹⁸ The cool

and dry winters of the interior are balanced by warm and temperate summers during which most of the annual 35 inches of rainfall occurs. In the lower plateau regions of the interior rainfall decreases to roughly 15-20 inches per year. The runoff from this seasonal rainfall collects in ancient riverbeds, or wadis, where it begins a perilous journey to the Tihama. Not a single river originating in the highlands flows perennially or survives the overland transit to the sea.¹⁹

North Yemen's vegetation spectrum parallels its landscape. Coffee, qat, cereals and vegetables dominate the highlands. Mediterranean fruits, millet, cotton and bananas are cultivated in the lower regions, and the date palm maintains a solitary existence along the parched coast.²⁰

According to the nation's first census, begun in 1975, North Yemen's population numbered close to 6.5 million people dispersed among eighteen regional tribes. These tribes are derived from five major groupings: Akk, Bakil, Madhhy, Hashid and Ismaili. Only 10% of the population is considered literate. Unlike the nomadic Somali's, over ninety percent of North Yemen's population are settled in villages or towns. Approximately 60-65% of the people reside in the western slopes and plateau regions while only 20% live along the coast. A significant portion of the population live and work outside the country. It is estimated that more than one million North Yemeni workers are employed in Saudi Arabia alone.²¹

According to North Yemen's constitution, "Islam is the state religion and Arabic the official state language."²² Within the state religion distinct sectarianism, between Shia and Sunni factions, parallels the topographic contrast. The people of the highlands cling strongly to the Zeid- branch of Shia Islam, while the inhabitants of the low and coastal lands adhere to the Shafii jurisprudence of Sunni Islam. As the distinguished Middle Eastern Scholar Tom Little points out, this religious sectarianism "is a factor of political importance."²³

Today's Yemen is the descendant of the Menaeen, Sabaeen and Himyarite kingdoms which dominated the Arabian peninsula in ancient times. The centers of these kingdoms served as marshalling points for the gold, ivory, precious stones and fabrics of Africa and India. Together with the frankincense, myrrh and spices of the region, they traveled by desert caravan to busy metropolises in Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem and Babylonia. The three Magi, perhaps, traversed the fabled route on their journey to Bethlehem. To ensure the prosperity of the caravan trade, roads, warehouses, watchtowers and forts were built, and sophisticated political and administrative organizations were developed. To capture and control the seasonal floodwaters the Menaeens built the Marib Dam. The dam was a significant engineering achievement, resembling, in a primitive way, the modern High Dam at Aswan. Its collapse coincided with the downfall of the Himyarites and the end of a glorious era.

The Himyarites were conquered by the Ethiopians in 525 A.D. who in turn were expelled by the Persians in 575 A.D. Yemen accepted Islam's embrace in the seventh century, and was subsequently ruled by the Caliphate, in Baghdad or Egypt, until the present century. For the most part this rule was in name only and limited to the accessible Tihama coastline. Forays into the highlands met stiff resistance from the fiercely independent tribesmen, led since the ninth century by descendants of the Rassid dynasty. The Rassid Imams, or priest-kings, combined tribal custom, religious law and a mutual hatred of foreign powers to unite, in loose cohesion, the tribal chiefs of Yemen.

The collapse of the Ottoman empire in 1918 marked the end of Turkish occupation in Yemen. Difficulties with Ibn Saud continued, however, and the eponymous ruler drove the Yemeni tribesmen back into Sana'a in 1934.

During the reign of Imam Ahmad, 1948-1962, North Yemen began to participate in international affairs. In 1951 diplomatic relations were established with the U.S., Great Britain and Egypt. The Soviet Union followed suit in 1956, and also renewed its 1928 Friendship Treaty with North Yemen. In the same year the Sana'a monarchy concluded an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia and a credit agreement with the USSR for port construction at Hodeida. In 1958 North Yemen joined with the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) to form the United Arab States.

The death of Imam Ahmad in September 1962 precipitated a revolution which pitted republicans against royalists in an eight year struggle for supremacy. The republicans, aided by Egypt and the USSR, achieved a negotiated victory in 1970 when the Royalist benefactor, Saudi Arabia, realized its biggest threat emanated not from Sana'a, but from the radical regime in Aden.

In the years both during and after the revolution, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) has been governed by a series of military officers and civilian strongmen. Neither of these has achieved any more success than their monarchical predecessors in establishing centralized control over the independent-minded tribal chiefs. The current president, Colonel Ali Abdullah Saleh, succeeded Colonel Ahmed al-Ghashmi when the later was assassinated by a bomb-totting South Yemeni envoy in 1978. President Saleh already has survived three assassination/coup attempts in this land where such gruesome phenomena are an accepted way of life.

Since 1962 the industrious people of North Yemen have made great efforts to modernize a most primitive economic infrastructure. At the time of the revolution, North Yemen had no formal currency or banking system, no water or sewage facilities, ancient road and communications systems and an electrical power output, limited to approximately two megawatts. Over ninety percent of the people labored in primitive agriculture and lived at the subsistence level. For the most part, economic statistics were not even recorded until the 1970's.²⁴

Although still rated as one of the twenty-five least developed countries of the world, by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, North Yemen has achieved significant progress. By 1977, the section of the labor force engaged in agriculture had dropped to seventy-three percent and the per capita income had risen to roughly \$250 (up from \$120 in 1974).

Agriculture remains the mainstay of the economy and accounts for over eighty-percent of the nations exports. The chief cash crop is cotton which is grown in the Tihama region. North Yemen began exporting cotton and associated products in 1972. By 1977 these exports earned roughly \$5 million.²⁵ Coffee, grown mainly on the mountain slopes behind Tihama, is the second largest crop. Sorghum, millet and other cereals also are cultivated. Nevertheless, North Yemen is unable to feed its own people, and food makes up the largest portion of the nation's imports.

Industry in the YAR employs about four percent of the labor force. Textile manufacturing, based on cotton, looms as the nation's most promising developing industry. North Yemen's lack of exploitable petroleum and mineral resources accounts for its low level of mining industry. Although some quantities of iron, lead, zinc, sulphur, silver, gold and uranium are known to exist, only salt has been extracted in marketable quantities. The majority of this salt comes from deposits near the port of Salif. The extensive nature of these salt deposits has led to the building of a rock salt

factory at Salif and the influx of foreign investment to increase the bulk loading capacity of the port. North Yemen's construction needs have spawned a nascent cement industry based at Bajil. Two more factories are planned in an effort to decrease costly cement imports. Other infant industries, mostly financed by external governments include soft drinks, plastics and aluminum factories, fisheries and construction materials manufacturing plants.

North Yemen's communications/transportation capability, though still quite inadequate, has improved significantly. Asphalt roads built mainly with foreign assistance now link all major cities. Three airports, at Sana'a, Hodeida and Taiz, can now handle large aircraft. Telecommunications capabilities include an earth satellite station, a microwave scatter sytem, a Communications College at Sana'a and roughly 14,000 telephone lines. Hodeida, Mocha and Salif comprise YAR's major seaports. Only Hodeida can accommodate vessels of any real size. Nevertheless, primitive port facilities at Hodeida contribute to congestion and unusually long waiting times for unloading.

North Yemen's balance of payments is marked by a growing trade deficit which trippled between 1975 and 1977 reaching \$705 million. Food imports, totaling more than 1.5 billion Yemeni riyals in 1977/78, make up the most significant share of this deficit. As shown in Table 2.2, YAR's export revenue, between 1972 and 1977, has only once exceeded 10% of its import revenue. The average for this six year period is

a mere 6% of import revenue, the lowest of the four states under study. Yet, Table 2.3 indicates a surplus in North Yemen's basic balance throughout the same time span. Private remittances sent home by the more than 1.5 million Yemeni nationals employed abroad account for these surpluses. In 1977 these remittances totaled nearly \$950 million, more than enough to offset the growing deficit.²⁶

A consistent surplus in the basic balance indicates YAR's positive potential for investment. Both Russian and China have been particularly eager to provide this investment. Soviet projects in North Yemen include port development at Hodeida, airport construction at Sana'a, a cement factory at Bajil, an oxygen plant and fishing industry assistance. China has contributed to the development of textile mills in Sana'a and Hodeida and the construction of a major road network. The U.S., Saudi Arabia, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and various international organizations also have invested substantial sums in the YAR. The capability to absorb these investments remains limited. Additionally, the large number of skilled laborers working abroad hinders North Yemen's ability to develop a viable and diversified economic infrastructure. North Yemen's future economic development relies on a mix of continued foreign assistance and domestic incentives to recall and retain its skilled emigrant laborers. This development mixture can only be achieved in a stable internal environment. Unfortunately, YAR's history does not augur for this type of environment.

2. South Yemen

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) claims sovereignty over an area of 111,000 square miles making it slightly less than half the size of Somalia. The topography of South Yemen is a mixture of wasteland and sparse grazing land with mountains engaging portions of the southwest coast. Verdant oases provide refreshing contrast in the barren Yemen landscape where less than one percent of the land is considered arable. South Yemen's climate, consistently hot, permits less than 9 in/yr of rain.

South Yemen's population of 1.7 million, nearly 100% Arab, maintains an annual growth rate of 2.9%. Arabic is the nation's official language, and Islam, in its various sects, the dominant religion. South Yemen's literacy rate of 10%, though small, is twice that of Ethiopia and Somalia. The British colonial legacy is reflected in this literacy rate which reaches 35% in Aden, a former British protectorate and the nation's chief port.²⁷

The watershed separating South Yemen's historical development from that of their northern brother occurred in the early part of the 19th century. In 1839 British forces seized the Aden and utilized the port as a coaling station on the trade routes to the Empire's outposts in India and the Far East. In 1959 the six states of Southern Yemen formed the Federation of South Arabia, which was joined by the Aden Protectorate in 1963. The British government, faced with increasing unrest by the marxist Yemeni National Liberation Front, granted full independence to the Federation in 1967.

Since independence the PDRY has followed the path of "scientific socialism" developing into one of the Soviet Union's staunchest allies. The PDRY, with Soviet and Cuban assistance, has been an ardent supporter of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) in the Dhofar rebellion being waged in neighboring Oman. The Sultan of Oman with copious Iranian military assistance temporarily squashed the Dhofar insurgency in 1975. In June of 1978 Salim Robaye Ali, the leftist but non-communist president of PDRY, was overthrown and executed by a radical coalition of Yemeni communists. This coalition, headed by General Secretary Abdel Fattah Ismail, openly professes its pro-Soviet stance, and its intention to renew support for the Dohofari rebels.²⁸ The South Yemeni leftists also maintain a long standing border rivalry with North Yemen. In early 1979, this rivalry erupted into armed conflict, sending tremors to the conservative Saudi regime and drawing a long awaited American show of force.

South Yemen's meager economy reflects its barren landscape and lack of marketable natural resources. In 1975 the nation's economic growth rate was a negative 4.3%. The majority of the population engage in pastoral pursuits at the subsistence level with some cultivation of dates, cereals, coffee and cotton found in the valley areas. Petroleum refining at Aden is the nation's most significant industry, and provides its major export. Crude oil imports, to supply this refinery, are provided by the USSR, Iraq and Kuwait. The Soviet portion of these imports is approximately 10,000 bbl/day.²⁹

The continuous decline in the ratio of export to import revenues depicted in Table 2.2, reflects the rising cost of these imports which is not offset by adequate sale of refined petroleum. The Soviet Union also provides assistance to South Yemen's fishing industry whose catch in 1974 amounted to 173,000 tons. South Yemen's only major port is at Aden. Included in the capabilities of this port are four ship repair facilities formerly owned by British companies.

Unlike North Yemen, the PDRY does not benefit from remittances sent home by emigrant laborers. The lack of these private transfers coupled with the regime-induced exodus of skilled labor and capital has had a devastating effect on the Aden economy. South Yemen's basic balance, depicted in Table 2.3, reflects a consistent and growing deficit. Considerable financial assistance from the USSR and China succeeded in redressing the basic balance in 1972 and 1973. However, this aid was unable to prevent the overall Balance of Payments deficits in 1974 which amounted to more than \$24 million.³⁰ Copious amounts of future aid will be required to salvage Aden's sagging economy. With the death of Salim Robaye Ali, the USSR assumed the role of South Yemen's principle and, in many cases, only donor. It is doubtful that the Soviet Union, itself a developing country, will be able to fill South Yemen's economic assistance needs. Nevertheless, the absence of an alternative donor will dampen the effect of Moscow's inadequacies. Eventually, domestic unrest, generated by unfulfilled revolutionary expectations, is certain to

accompany South Yemen's deteriorating economic situation. In Moscow's estimation, this unrest can be contained by the military assistance which it is quite capable of providing.

D. CONCLUSION

From this brief introduction certain conclusions may be drawn concerning the nations of the Red Sea basin. Each of these nations has a resplendent past which endears their people with a deep sense of national pride and independence.

Throughout their history these states have interacted freely across the Red Sea. These interactions in pursuit of trade, conquest and religious prosyletization have left cultural imprints on both sides of the "Gate of Tears" (Babel Mandeb). Thus, we see traces of Aksumite architecture in an early reconstruction of Mecca's sacred Kaaba, and terraced farming in Eritrea, similar to that practiced in the highlands of Yemen. These cultural linkages are repeated in the political, religious and linguistic traditions of the region. They are not wholly African or Arabian, but rather a carefully woven patchwork of Afro-Arab primordialism. Accordingly, policy prescriptions for Ethiopia and Somalia must fall under an overall policy for the Middle East as well as Africa. The same is true for North and South Yemen.

All except Ethiopia have been subjected to colonialism. Curiously enough, Ethiopia is accused, by Somalia and Eritrea, of being in league with the European colonial powers. This fact provides legitimacy to the Eritrean liberation fighters and the Ogadeni insurgents but has not, as yet, persuaded

their African neighbors who cling to the OAU convention vis-a-vis the inviability of colonially inscribed borders.

The rugged landscape and harsh climate in the nations of the Red Sea basin ensures a difficult life for those who inhabit the area. Although intelligent, the great majority of these people are illiterate. Agriculture employs the largest section of the labor force, and subsistence farming, using the most primitive techniques, is widespread. Droughts are not uncommon, and have had a devastating effect in the 1970's. These macabre whims of nature have driven many unskilled laborers into urban areas contributing to unemployment, frustration and civil unrest. To date, there appears to be no mineral or petroleum resources worthy of exploitation in the Red Sea basin. This lack of resources has plagued industrial development, which is still in its infant stage, throughout the region. The absence of adequate transportation and communications facilities, skilled labor and a viable education system contribute to the marginal pace of industrial development.

Worldwide inflation, inspired by skyrocketing oil prices, is particularly damaging to the nations of the Red Sea basin. Import costs have risen much faster than export revenue, which is tied to nature-dependent agricultural products. Consequently, these states rely heavily on external financial aid to avoid huge balance of payments deficits. This reliance is not likely to subside in the near term.

In terms of attracting foreign interest, the geostratic location of the Red Sea basin emerges as the region's most precious natural resource. Together with the Suez Canal, the Red Sea serves as a maritime conduit between Europe and Asia. The seaborne commerce, of both the free and communist worlds, depends heavily on this conduit. The proximity of the Red Sea basin to the world's largest petroleum reserves adds immeasurable significance to the region. Accordingly, the Red Sea basin has become an area of intense superpower competition. This, too, is not likely to decrease in the near term.

In sum, the foregoing factors inspire a certain commonality of interests between the superpowers and the nations of the Red Sea basin. The geostrategic significance of the southern Red Sea littoral attracts external involvement. Such involvement is welcome because of the need for outside assistance to bolster deficient economics. The interaction of these two factors takes place in an environment of persistent instability spawned by patterns of conflict thoroughly reinforced by an intricate set of Afro-Arab cultural and primordial linkages. Destabilizing events generated by this environment necessitate external military assistance which further exacerbates the domestic economy and heightens the degree of superpower competition.

CHAPTER II FOOTNOTES

¹Irving Kaplan et al., Area Handbook for Ethiopia (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1971), p. vii. Majority of statistical information on Ethiopia is taken from this handbook. Other sources are noted as they occur.

²Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook (London: Copley and Associates, 1978), p. 155.

³John H. Spencer, Ethiopia, The Horn of Africa, and U.S. Policy (Cambridge, Mass.: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., 1977), p. 9. Spencer, who served as an advisor to the Ethiopian government during this time period, asserts that British control was so pervasive as to include: communications, currency, correspondence and traffic control. "Goodyear, Goodrich or Firestone tires could be purchased only if they had been manufactured by their branches in England."

⁴Europa Year Book 1976 A World Survey. 2 vols. (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1976), vol. 2: Africa, The Americas, Asia, Australasia, p. 522.

⁵U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, 1976, 2 vols. (New York: U.N. Statistical Office, 1977), vol. 2: Trade by Country, p. 331.

⁶Kaplan et al., p. 376.

⁷In an interview with a leader of the (ELF-PLF) the subject of the Ethiopian-Eritrean Federation was discussed. According to this leader there "never was a federation." All the members of the national assembly in Eritrea were "chiefs appointed by Addis Ababa."

⁸Peter Vanneman and Martin James, "Soviet Thrust Into the Horn of Africa: The Next Targets," Strategic Review 6 (Spring 1978): 27. According to discussions with a leader of the Ethiopian Democratic Union, the ELF is not receiving aid from anybody, and the EPLF is believed to be getting assistance from Eurocommunist parties. As for the ELF-PLF, a leader of this front indicated that the Arab nations have "abandoned them." This leader indicated that \$1 m in Saudi Arabian aid intended for the ELF-PLF was lost somewhere in the

Sudanese bureaucracy. This was the total amount of Saudi Aid provided to the ELF-PLF. According to very reliable sources, last fall this leader received \$2.5 m from Libyan leader Muamar Gadhaffy who is unhappy with Ethiopia for not interceding on behalf of Libyan prisoners in Tanzania. This aid was mainly for medical and other supplies.

⁹ Ibid. According to a leader of the Ethiopian Democratic Union, sources within the Ethiopian military have indicated that, as of last fall, Eritrea remains the nation's single most significant problem.

¹⁰ Statement by General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the U.S. Congress, Senate, Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia, Hearings on Senate Resolution 160 to Disapprove Construction Projects on the Island of Diego Garcia, 94th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1975), quoted in Spencer p. 58.

¹¹ Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook, p. 464.

¹² Irving Kaplan et al., Area Handbook for Somalia (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1977), p. vii. Majority of statistical information on Somalia is taken from this handbook. Other sources are noted as they occur.

¹³ World Atlas, imperial ed. (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1976), p. 95.

¹⁴ Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook, p. 465.

¹⁵ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 20.

¹⁶ Pravda, 13 December 1977, quoted in Vanneman and James, p. 35.

¹⁷ Richard F. Nyrop et al., Area Handbook for the Yemens (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1977), p. 167.

¹⁸ Europa The Middle East and North Africa 1979-80 (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1979), p. 824.

¹⁹ Tom Little, South Arabia: Arena of Conflict (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968), p. 3.

²⁰ Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1979-80, p. 838.

- ²¹Nyrop et al., p. 169.
- ²²Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1979-80, p. 838.
- ²³Little, p. 7.
- ²⁴Nyrop et al., p. 185.
- ²⁵Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1979-80, p. 857.
- ²⁶International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics 32 (April 1979): 357.
- ²⁷Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook, p. 621. Majority of statistical information for PDRY is taken from this handbook. Other sources are noted as they occur.
- ²⁸Donald S. Zagoria, "Into the Breach: New Soviet Alliances In the Third World," Foreign Affairs 57 (Spring 1979): 739.
- ²⁹Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, p. 34.
- ³⁰International Financial Statistics, p. 357.

TABLE 2.1

Capacity to Import (CAPTIM) and Net Barter
Terms of Trade (NBTOT) for Ethiopia

Index: 1975 = 100

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1st Qtr '78	2nd Qtr '78
CAPTIM	130.8	100	110.6	103.4	94.1	121.6
NBTOT	1.2	1	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.3

Data taken from International Financial Statistics,
IMF, 32 (April 1979): pp. 138-139.

$$\text{CAPITIM} = \frac{P_x Q_x}{P_m}$$

where:

P_x = price of exports

P_m = price of imports

Q_x = quantity of exports

$$\text{NBTOT} = \frac{\text{Index of } P_x \times 100}{\text{Index of } P_m}$$

where:

P_x = price of exports

P_m = price of imports

TABLE 2.2

Ratio of Export Revenue to Import Revenue for
Somalia, Ethiopia People's Democratic
Republic of Yemen (PDRY) and Yemen
Arab Republic (YAR)

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
SOMALIA	.57	.49	.47	.57	-	-
PDRY	.72	.65	.59	.54	.52	-
ETHIOPIA	.88	1.12	.94	.76	.79	.94
YAR	.05	.06	.07	.14	.03	.06

Data taken from IMF, International Financial Statistics
32 (April 1979), pp. 138, 330, 404, 406.

TABLE 2.3

Basic Balance 1972-1977

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
ETHIOPIA	40.3	128.7	106.3	23.2	332.8	-47.0
SOMALIA	10.5	-12.6	9.4	52.7	.4	31.2
YAR	-	-	37.9	147.5	344.2	348.7
PDRY	-16.9	-25.6	-47.4	-	-	-

Basic Balance is the sum of goods and services, transfers and long term capital. A negative sign indicates a deficit. Data taken from International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics, 32 April 1979): 119, 330, 357. The Basic Balance provides a credible indication of a nation's investment potential as well as its long term economic performance. In most cases the Basic Balance (deficit or surplus) corresponds with the overall Balance (i.e., Total Change in Reserves).

III. PATTERNS OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN THE RED SEA BASIN

Various soviet scholars have noted the preoccupation with change that pervades the Soviet world outlook.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, asserts:

The general Soviet approach to international affairs is strongly affected by the fundamental Soviet assumption that all material reality changes continuously through the clash of antagonistic contradictions.¹

The persistent instability of the Red Sea Basin complements this Weltanshauung, and thus, enhances Moscow's desire and capability to pursue its strategic incentives. While the USSR has certainly gained from destabilizing events in this region, they have also lost. A misreading of the factors producing this instability and an all too easy inclination to attribute it to the forces of proletarian internationalism or the materialist dialectic has often left Moscow perplexed and dismayed in the course of its relations with the nations of the Red Sea littoral. A brief look at some of the destabilizing events of the region reveals the more salient factors producing the instability which has both benefited and frustrated Soviet national security.

Dealing initially with Saudi Arabia's peripheral neighbors, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), we find no dearth of destabilizing events. The revolution in Yemen from

1962-1970, the national liberation of South Yemen, the continual border clashes between the YAR and the PDRY, and the assassination/coups in both nations provide numerous examples of the repetitive internal and external factors contributing to persistent regional instability.

A. REVOLUTION IN SANA'A

On September 9, 1962, Iman Ahmad of Yemen succumbed to emphysema, and was succeeded by his son, Mohammad al-Badr. Ironically, Ahmad's death by natural causes precipitated a violent revolutionary upheaval, which had been smoldering beneath the surface for many years. This destabilizing event, requiring nearly eight bloody years to run its full course, resulted from many factors typified by the various actors involved. On the surface the revolution's antagonists comprised two camps, Royalist and Republican. Internally, each camp was divided into various disparate factions some of whom found convenience in altering their allegiance during the course of the conflict.

The Republican ranks contained a loose coalition of urban oriented groups: Army officers, Shafi'is merchants, intellectuals, industrial laborers and expatriate dissidents.²

In an attempt to overcome the disadvantages of his father's traditionally xenophobic policies, Iman Ahmad expanded Yemen's contacts with the outside World. In view of ill-feelings towards the British, stemming from the latter's presence in Aden, it is not illogical that the

targets of this international initiative included Egypt, USSR, Eastern Europe and China.³ As a result of expanded ties with these nations Yemeni army officers received training abroad, or were students of foreign instructors and advisors sent to Yemen as part of various military and economic assistance pacts. The disparity in life styles between the Yemeni officers and their counterparts, in Egypt and the USSR, became increasingly difficult for the former to reconcile. This disparity and the accompanying dissidence was further aggravated when Ahmad reversed the military salary increases, cancelled payoffs to the Hashid tribes and closed the Egyptian police and air force schools all initiated by al Badr while his father was in Rome undergoing treatment for morphine addiction.⁴

The Shafi'is merchants in the lowlands benefited directly from the increased revenues accruing from expanded contacts with the outside world. Many of these merchants sought to invest in the development of the economy. Yet, without any effective means of political participation, there was no way to protect their investments. Under the imamate the Shafi'is, a Sunni branch of Islam, also suffered from the sectarian prejudices of the ruling Sayid oligarchy and the Zeidi-Shiite tribes who backed them.

The urban intellectuals were divided along generational lines. The older intellectuals represented by men such as Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani, founder of the Jamiyat al-Islah

(The Reform Society), had been repeatedly frustrated in their attempts to extract meaningful reforms from the imamate. The younger intellectuals, primarily educated abroad, professed various ideological creeds. Nevertheless, they were united in their desire for substantial structural change in the Yemeni system of government. For them such change symbolized the required first step in the journey towards achievement of the putative societal benefits promised by their acquired political philosophies. Both old and young intellectuals concurred in their perception of the imamate as the primary stumbling block on the path to a better way of life for Yemeni society.

The industrial laborers, much like the Shafi'is merchants, realized that the traditional government was inadequate to fulfill the needs resulting from expanded development.

Each of these groups benefited, either materially or in prestige, from the expanded contacts and modest reforms of the Imams. Yet, these very policies created values and aspirations which the imamate was either unwilling or unable to accommodate. The expatriot dissidents contributed to the revolutionary atmosphere by emphasizing government shortcomings in their broadcasts from Aden and Cairo.

The Royalists were comprised of a similarly loose, and not always amicable, coalition inclined towards traditional Yemeni values. The fragile royalist alliance consisted of the Hamid al-Din royal family and the Zaidi tribesmen who

controlled the northern portion of the country. The royal family was internally cleaved into three competing factions.

Mohammad al-Badr was formally declared to be Imam Ahmad's successor in October 1961, about one year before the latter's death. As such, when al-Badr succeeded to the Imamate on 19 September 1962, he possessed the most viable claim to legitimacy among the Royalist camp. Cognizant of this fact, al-Badr immediately sought fealty oaths from the Zaidi sheikks. Though he realized the need for support from traditional elements, the Egyptian-educated al-Badr displayed uncharacteristically progressive tendencies. Substantially influenced by Nasser's example in Egypt, al-Badr became the driving force behind the reforms initiated in his father's reign. Following Nasser's lead, al-Badr emphasized the need for increased relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.⁵ Despite his claim to legitimacy and his reformist aspirations, al-Badr lacked some of the essential attributes of the Zaidi Imams. As Robert Stookey points out:

Not devoid of personal courage, he nevertheless lacked the martial elan of a traditional Zaidi-imam, and neglected to cultivate a reputation for knowledge of the law, piety, and asceticism.⁶

Prince Hasan bin Yaya, the new Imam's uncle, represented the second faction within the royal family. Hasan possessed the traditional qualities of the Zaidi imams as well as a great deal of charisma which caused much concern for Ahmad and al-Badr. Hasan's posting in far away New York, as Yemen's

U.N. ambassador, reflected this concern. Upon Ahmad's death Hasan returned to Yemen. When he received a false report that al-Badr was dead, he immediately proclaimed himself Imam. Hasan appealed to the more traditional tribes and did not hesitate to proclaim his nephew incompetent by virtue of his secular and reformist tendencies.

The third faction within the royal family was led by al-Badr's son, Prince Mohammad bin Husain. Husain's reputation grew as the revolution progressed and his military and political skills became more evident. Husain appealed to the younger western-educated princes who recognized the need for a more representative form of government. By 1966 Husain's faction was the dominant power in the royal family.⁷

The Zaidi tribes of north and eastern Yemen comprised the remaining portions of the royalist camp. The Zaidi tribe represented the most traditional element of the Yemeni society. They were generally unaware of the political situation, and saw no reason for structural change that would lead to diffusion of their own power base. Their values were instrumental in nature. In return for security, livelihood and autonomous control of their homelands they swore allegiance to the Imam. However, allegiance to the Imam did not mean surrender of traditional independence. The sheikhs were paid dearly for their services, and generally refused to submit to a unified military command. Tribal leaders viewed Egyptian presence in Yemen as a form

of tutelage which brought their xenophobic sentiments to a fever pitch. Feelings of honor and blood revenge run strong within the tribes, and on occasion caused sheikhs to switch allegiance to the republican cause. Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein, of the Hashid tribe, for example, joined the republican side to avenge the death of his father and brother, who had been executed by Imam Ahmad.⁸ The case of Sheikh Qassim Munassar who switched sides near the end of the civil war, provides an interesting portrait of traditional tribal values in action. In one report Munassar is said to have altered his allegiance as a result of the withdrawal of Egyptian troops from Yemen. Another report, probably nearer to the truth, indicates the sheikh changed sides because the Saudi backed royal family curtailed payment for his services.⁹ Had they been able to coordinate the efforts of the Zaidi tribes, the royalists would have easily overcome the fledgling republican army. The failure of the Imam, in this regard, constitutes a major factor in the eventual defeat of the royalist counter-revolution. Conversely, the fierce independence of the tribes and the tenacious adherence to traditional values continuously frustrated republican leaders in their attempts to centralize the government and establish control throughout the countryside.¹⁰

Considering the centrifugal forces within each camp, it is no wonder that neither republican nor royalist forces

were able to achieve a decisive victory during the eight year revolution. The ephemeral resolution of the conflict, achieved in May 1970 after considerable arm twisting by Egypt and Saudi Arabia of their respective clients, provided for a compromise republican government in which four royalists were allotted cabinet portfolios and twelve royalists obtained seats in the national assembly.¹¹ However, the factors which produced this destabilizing event were not resolved. The conflict between tribal and urban value systems, sectarian religious prejudices, inter-governmental struggles for power, and resistance to the imposition of consumatory goals and centralized government in the rural highlands have not disappeared.

Had Egypt not suffered a devastating defeat in 1967 and Saudi Arabia not been more concerned with the threat from radical South Yemen, the revolution in North Yemen would be in progress to this day. Subsequent instability in the YAR, exemplified by the Iryani coup in 1967, the al-Hamdi coup in 1974, al-Hamdi's assassination in 1977 and the Ghashmi suitcase assassination of 1978 testifies to the continuing presence and explosive interaction of these destabilizing factors within the Yemeni society.

B. NATIONAL LIBERATION OF SOUTH YEMEN

The liberation movement in South Yemen and the post-independence turmoil in that combustible nation exhibit patterns of instability quite similar to those in the YAR.

Yet, the impact of more than a century of British imperial rule in Aden produced additional levels of conflict markedly different from those noted above. On January 19, 1839, forces of the British Indian Navy under Commander Stafford Bettsworth Haines seized Aden. The importation of Indians and Pakistanis as merchants and clerks for the new British protectorate generated ill-feelings within Aden that persisted throughout the British tenure. The common denominator of Islam soothed some of the ill-feelings towards the Pakistanis. However, the Indians, with their Hindu religion, became the subject of sectarian as well as xenophobic discontent. The British system of indirect rule, cultivated throughout the empire, inspired additional levels of conflict. Indirect rule allowed regional chieftans complete autonomy, and thus erected a political barrier between the developing metropolis of Aden and the undeveloped, backward outer-protectorates. Young men coming to Aden in search of education and employment could not help but notice the stark social and political differences between this cosmopolitan city and their homelands. Social mobility within Aden was limited for these tribal immigrants. Despite their educational achievement, they could not advance within the colony's administrative apparatus. Labeling this unsated segment of the Adeni population as the "tribal intelligentsia," Mordechai Abir concludes:

Personal frustration, the condition of their kinsmen in the protectorates and contacts with the South Yemeni diaspora all affected their social outlook and political thinking. Thus the new tribal intelligentsia was attracted by radical socio-political ideologies rather than merely by pragmatic Arab nationalism.¹²

Already an important outpost on the British-Indian Ocean trade routes, Aden acquired heightened strategic and commercial significance with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The canal's opening inspired the development of a dynamic service-related economy in Aden. An urban industrial proletariat, with aspirations for labor rights and privileges and a desire for some measure of political participation, emerged from this economic development.

The attractiveness of developing Aden stimulated the expansionist tendencies of various tribal sheikhs who saw in British withdrawal an opportunity to increase their territory and their wealth. The sultan of Lahej, for example, became an early supporter of the liberation movement with an eye on including Aden in an eventual independent state under his leadership.¹³

The British presence in Aden thus led to the development of the various factions in the liberation movement. The earliest political association to emerge in the colony was the Aden Association. Indians, Pakistanis and Somalis comprised the membership of this group which sought to protect their positions in the Adeni society. About 1950 the South Arabian League was formed by Mahammad Ali Jifri

and his brothers who enjoyed the support of the previously noted Sultan of Lahej, Ali Abd al-Karim.

The rise of Nasser in Egypt and the revolution in North Yemen stimulated the development of additional liberation elements.

In 1956 Adeni Union leaders formed the Trade Union Congress (TUC) to coordinate strike activities against the British controlled industry. An outgrowth of the TUC, the People's Socialist Party (PSP) was founded in 1962 by Abdallah al-Asnaj. North Yemeni workers comprised the foundation of this party which was heavily influenced by events in Sanaa. The 1962 Revolution also sparked the various splinter groups of tribal intelligentsia to join forces and form the National Liberation Front (NLF) in 1963 under the leadership of Qahtan Ash Sha'ahbi. The NLF leader's name provides a clue to another destabilizing factor abetted under British rule. The majority of the Adeni population claim descendance from Qahtan ibn Amir, the legendary first pure Southern Arab. The tribal sheikhs, however, proclaim Adnan, the first northern Arab, as their patriarch. The British system of indirect rule intensified this ethnic cleavage. The Qahtanis perceived indirect rule as a British-Adnani alliance designed to exploit their people and their land. The Adnanis, for their part, assured of British protection, consolidated their positions and maximized their gains in the countryside and the city.

Great Britain, stung by events in Egypt and concerned with the rising wave of Arab-nationalism, responded to the various liberation movements by forming the South Arabian Federation in 1959. Despite this federation, which Aden joined in 1962, and the efforts of the South Arabian Army, the British position became increasingly tenuous. By the end of 1965 the British government was forced to announce its intentions to withdraw by January 1968. This announcement caused a polarization of the liberation factions into two primary groups who now directed their terrorist activities against each other vice the British. The Popular Socialist Party and the South Arabian League joined under the banner of Arab Nationalism to form the Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South (OLOS).

The second faction consisted of the National Liberation Front whose radical ideology reflected its links with rabid segments of the Palestinian liberation movement.¹⁴ A nominal unification of the OLOS and NLF to form the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) in early 1966 collapsed by the end of the year. Although it retained its name and a modicum of Egyptian support, FLOSY was unable to stem the rising tide of NLF power. The two factions clashed in Aden in 1967. The defeated FLOSY was forced to withdraw into North Yemen where it has since conducted its attacks against the NLF. It has been speculated that the British preferred to hand over the government to the

NLF because of its anti-Egyptian stance.¹⁵ However, a more realistic conclusion can be drawn from the statement of a British official addressing parliament in November 1967, "We hand over to whatever authority exists there when we go."¹⁶ When the British left on November 30, 1967, the NLF constituted that authority, and its leader Qahtan Ash Sha'abi became the first president of People's Republic of South Yemen.

The British withdrawal removed a significant basis for conflict in South Yemen. However, several indigenous levels of conflict remained.

One very basic level of conflict pits the government in its quest to consolidate the nation into a unitary state against the inhabitants of the outlying provinces who maintain deep rooted feelings of regional independence. The NLF's radical socio-economic reform programs, forcibly implemented in the countryside, have encountered considerable opposition. This opposition stems from the fiercely independent tribesmen and is compounded by the isolation and inaccessibility of the tribal areas.¹⁷

Another factor causing instability concerns the traditionally oriented and British trained ex-federal army officers. These officers, mostly Aulaqi tribesmen, were the subjects of various NLF purges carried out by the less traditional army officers recruited from the Dahtina tribes. Many of the Aulaqi officers were forced into

exile in North Yemen. In July 1968 the Aulaqis aided by the Audhali tribesmen, under Jibl bin Hussein, and supported by Saudi Arabia, YAR and the FLOSY launched an unsuccessful revolt against the NLF regime.¹⁸ The Dahtina army officers also were purged when they refused to swallow the more militant reform programs initiated by NLF extremists.

A third level of conflict centers on interpersonal rivalry between moderates and extremists in the NLF. Since independence, government turnovers in South Yemen have followed a general pattern wherein extremists accede to power, become moderates, and are then replaced by subsequent extremist factions. In June 1969, Ash Sha'abi was forced to resign for not implementing the Zanjibar Resolutions formulated by NLF extremists in March of that year. His successor, Mohammad ali-Haytham, was ousted in July 1971 for his moderate policies which included seeking desperately needed aid from non-communist countries. Salim Robaye Ali, one of the extremists who engineered Haythem's downfall, occupied the presidency until June 1978 when he was deposed and summarily executed by an ultra-leftist, pro-Soviet faction led by NLF ideologue Abdel Fattah Ismail. Ali's crimes included an inclination towards China and a modest approach to friendlier relations with Saudi Arabia and the YAR.¹⁹

South Yemen's chronic economic problems contribute yet another destabilizing factor in an already volatile environment. The closure of the Suez Canal in 1967

drastically curtailed the maritime traffic calling at Aden, thus depriving the government of its major source of revenue. The government's radical fiscal programs which included doubling the income tax rate and reducing government salaries up to 60%, compounded the problem by stimulating a mass exodus of skilled labor and capital out of the country.²⁰ The NLF's massive defense expenditures required to liquidate resistance in the countryside and pursue its revolutionary aspirations in Dhofar further aggravated an already deplorable economic situation. To assuage its economic plight South Yemen would be required to slow down the pace of socio-economic reform and attract massive amounts of foreign aid. However, as previously noted, when NLF leaders pursued a moderate course or sought aid from diverse sources, they were hastily removed.

The presence of South Yemeni dissidents in the YAR and vice-versa presents an additional destabilizing element which plagues both nations. These dissident forces play a major role in the border clashes which have erupted into armed conflict between the Yemens in 1972 and 1979.²¹ Though both Yemens have professed a desire to form a single nation, neither Aden nor Sanaa desire to come under the other's control.²² Hence, attempts to subvert the regimes in each nation continue. These attempts are often financed by external actors with a perceived stake in the area. Saudi Arabia provides assistance to dissident

elements operating out of North Yemen as a means of countering the subversive operations of the radical government in Aden. The USSR, Eastern Europe and China, on occasion, have supported the South Yemeni government in its attempts to undermine "reactionary"-governments in the Arabian peninsula.²³

The destabilizing factors outlined above augur continued instability in South Yemen. Traditional ethnic cleavages; the conflict between urban and rural value systems, nurtured by the British colonial experience; the incessant implementation of radical socio-economic programs, aggravating substantial economic difficulties; and the preaching of a radical atheistic ideology, denouncing the faith that sustains the impoverished inhabitants of a selfish land, combine to form a self-sustaining chain of lupine instability. In short, South Yemen, as described by its current leader, is "a nation that can go up in flames with a single matchstick."²⁴

C. HORN OF AFRICA

Across the Red Sea in the Horn of Africa, the situation is no less violent. Chronic instability typified by the Ethiopian-Somali conflict in the Ogaden, the Eritrean liberation struggle, the Afar Liberation Movement, christian and African irredentism in southern Sudan and a growing number of assassination and coup attempts threaten the balkanisation of this strategic portion of the Red Sea

basin. A closer look at a portion of these events reveals factors both strikingly similar and markedly different from those in the Arabian peninsula.

1. Eritrea

Although nominally a province of Ethiopia, Eritrea has been the scene of the Horn's largest and perhaps most enigmatic secessionist movement. Inhabited primarily by the descendents of Arabian immigrants who crossed the Red Sea in the first millennium B.C., present day Eritrea encompasses much of the area known in ancient times as the Kingdom of Axum. Conquered by Moslem forces in the tenth century, Eritrea maintains a strong Islamic character. As part of a belated entrance into the European "scramble for Africa" the Italians established a colonial base at Massawa in 1885. It was here that the name and regional dimensions of this beleaguered province came into being.* Menelik II, who became emperor of Ethiopia in 1889, allowed the Italians complete control of the region, thus freeing himself to pursue the southward expansion of his empire.²⁵ Italian attempts to expand their presence in Ethiopia met with staunch resistance. At the Battle of Adowa in 1895, the Italians were thoroughly defeated by the Ethiopians who utilized the strategy of their Russian military advisor,

*Eritrea's name is derived from the Greek word Sinus Aerithreus, meaning Red Sea.

Cpt. N.S. Leontiev.²⁶ British forces occupied Eritrea in 1941, and administered the area until 1955. At this time a UN sponsored federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia became effective. In 1962, in a move skillfully orchestrated by Haile Selassie, the Eritrean parliament voted to dissolve the federation and come under full control of Addis Ababa.

About 1960 the Eritrean Democratic Front, the first liberation organization, was founded in Cairo by labor union activists Ibrahim Sultan Ali and Woldeab Woldemariam. Commensurate with acquiring arms in 1961, this group changed its name to the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and inaugurated the recorded history of the conflict with a series of sporadic attacks.²⁷ After eighteen years and various internal fissures in the liberation movement, this destabilizing event continues with the Eritrean forces now operating from strongholds in the highland areas of the province.

Various causal factors contribute to this continuing pattern of instability. A very basic element of this instability derives from the apparently unresolvable dual historical claims to the region. As Marina and David Ottoway assert:

It has always been a matter of contention between the Eritrean nationalists and the central Ethiopian government whether Eritrea was historically part of the Ethiopian empire. In a sense, both claims are wrong...there was never an Eritrea in its present boundaries before the Italian conquest, just as there was never an Ethiopia in its modern configuration before the conquests of Emperor Menelik at the turn of the century and before the federation between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1952.²⁸

Ethiopia's need for access to the sea constitutes a second factor contributing to this destabilizing event. Without the Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa, Ethiopia is essentially a land locked country. Both ports accommodate deep sea vessels and possess cargo handling and storage facilities. Ethiopia also conducts a large portion of its export/import trade via Djibouti. Nearly all of this trade passes over the 480 mile Chemin de Fer Franco-Ethiopian railway which links Addis Ababa with the Red Sea. Within two months of Djibouti's independence, in 1977, Somali insurgents put this railway out of commission.²⁹ The vulnerability of this link with the Red Sea thus clearly demonstrated, it is inconceivable that Ethiopia would relinquish its claims to Assab and Massawa.

The religious cleavage between Islam and Christianity provides still another level of conflict emerging during the course of the liberation struggle. Though Tigrinya Christians occupy the Eritrean highlands and have joined the liberation struggle in large numbers, the movement's strongest support stems from its Islamic-Arab heritage. As such, calls for "jihad" against the regime in Addis Ababa are not uncommon. For its part, the ruling junta in Ethiopia, known as the Dergue (which means shadow), has utilized the admonishment to "repulse the foreign infidel" as a means of mobilizing mass support in the hard-core Christian provinces.³⁰

The perception of the conflict as an Islamic vs. Christian, or perhaps an Arab vs. non-Arab, struggle affects

the nature of external actors drawn into the embroglio. Eritrea enjoys support from all Arab nations save Libya and South Yemen. On occasion even these radical Arab states have provided a degree of support.³¹ Another manifestation of the sectarian nature of the struggle is reflected in Sudan's staunch support for Eritrea as a means of countering Ethiopia's encouragement for the Anya Nyas Christians who occupy a southern portion of Sudan known as the "Sudanese Biafra." To complicate matters further, Addis Ababa provides training facilities in Gondar, northwestern Ethiopia, for the Ansaris whose right-wing Islamic "Mahdist" movement attempted to oust Sudanese President Numayri in July 1976. When mixed with strategic concerns, the sectarian element produces a unique assortment of bedfellows in each camp. Israel, for example, until its expulsion in February 1978 found itself aligned on the side of Ethiopia, USSR, Libya and PDRY, and against the U.S.³²

Latent sectarian allegiances also form a basis for conflict within the various liberation organizations. While strictly religious differences provide only minor disputes, the apparent predilection of the youthful Christian elements for radical-social ideologies has been a major cause of fragmentation within the liberation movement.³³

Conflicts leading to fissures within the liberation movement reflect additional factors begetting instability. As ELF membership grew various disjunctions surfaced: Christianity vs. Islam, rural values vs. urban values, and

socialism vs. nationalism. In 1970, Osman Saleh Sabbe, an Arab nationalist, broke away and formed the Eritrean People's Liberation Forces (EPLF). The EPLF drew support from Iraq and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Sabbe's faction attempted to promote a nationalist and socialist image. As such, it attracted urban intellectuals and Christian youths with leftist ideas. Eventually, a power struggle developed between the nationalist Sabbe, who spent most of his time developing contacts outside of Eritrea, and the Socialist leader of the forces in the field, Issayas Afeworki. This struggle led to Sabbe's expulsion from the EPLF in March 1976.³⁴ Subsequent to his ouster, Sabbe formed the ELF-PLF which draws support from Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The Pro-Iraqi faction left ELF-PLF in April 1979.³⁵

The conflicts leading to fragmentation within the Eritrean liberation movement constitute a microcosm of effluent forces to be encountered in an independent Eritrea. Interpersonal struggles for power, religious and ethnic conflicts and the clash of radical with moderate social philosophies most certainly will intensify should the unifying goal of independence approach realization.

A final destabilizing factor, sustaining the Eritrean struggle, derives from conflicts within the Dergue over the course of action to be pursued in dealing with the problem. One faction, initially led by Gen. Aman Andom and Maj. Sisay Habate, argues for a policy based on reconciliation.³⁶ In May 1976 this faction issued a nine-point program designed

to peacefully end the conflict. The other faction, headed by Mengistu Haile Mariam and Atnafu Abate, calls for repression of the "shiftas" (bandits) in Eritrea, a policy akin to that pursued by Haile Selassie prior to his demise in 1974. While the reconciliation faction was in Eritrea drumming up support for the nine-point program, Mengistu was mobilizing a 40,000 strong peasant army for a massive people's assault on the guerrilla forces.

The ill-fated Gen. Aman, himself an Eritrean and the revolution's first president, was shot while resisting arrest by the Dergue in November 1974. Sisay, however, gained tremendous popularity when Mengistu's ill-equipped and untrained peasant army was routed. Perceiving a threat to his own position, Mengistu ordered Sisay executed on July 13, 1976. The remaining members of the reconciliation faction succumbed in typically ensanguined fashion during a shootout at the old palace of Emperor Menelik on February 3, 1977.³⁷ Mengistu's purge of the reconciliation faction eliminated the only chance for a cessation of hostilities in Eritrea. The subsequent repressive policies pursued by the Dergue contribute to unification within the liberation movement and assure continuation of this destabilizing event.

2. Irredentism in the Ogaden

Another continuing source of instability in the Horn of Africa stems from rival claims over the pastoral Haud and Ogaden (subsequently referred to as Ogaden) regions of Ethiopia. The disputed area lies within a lineal collage of

boundary lines, spheres of influence and territorial conventions resulting from French, British, Italian and Ethiopian negotiations between 1888 and 1950. Noticeably absent from these negotiations were the Somalis who assert that Ethiopia's independent status, throughout the period, linked it with the colonial powers: "Ethiopia had not been a helpless victim of the dealings of European colonial powers, but a party to the conquest of the Horn of Africa."³⁸

The British administered much of the Ogaden until 1955. In 1960 both British and Italian Somaliland acquired independence and joined to form the Somali Democratic Republic. Trouble in the Ogaden began shortly thereafter with the creation of the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) in 1961. Intermittent clashes erupted into war between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1964. Ethiopia emerged as the decided victor in this first encounter which was defused by the Organization of African Unity. A humiliated Somalia withdrew and regrouped in preparation for the next round. A \$35 million arms agreement with the Soviet Union, concluded at the end of 1963, provided the basis for this preparation.³⁹

In 1975 the WSLF, supported by heavily armed Somalia, began a series of clashes designed to capitalize on the revolutionary turmoil taking place in Ethiopia. In anticipation of future gains in revolutionary Ethiopia, the Soviets restrained the insurgent forces. As one Somali officer bemoaned:

The Soviets stopped us from attacking Ethiopia when it was most vulnerable. They may well have made us miss a historic opportunity.⁴⁰

Soviet restraint was much less effective in the spring and summer of 1977 when Somali insurgents launched a massive incursion into the Ogaden. This offensive, initially most successful, advanced deep into Ethiopia reaching the outskirts of Harar by November. At this point Soviet arms and Cuban troops, in Ethiopia, and the curtailment of Soviet arms to Somalia combined to force the Somali insurgents out of the Ogaden.

A vivisection of this destabilizing event reveals various pathological factors. Foremost among them is the pervasive and unifying concept of Somali nationalism or pan-Somalism:

From Djibouti in the north to Kenya's Tana River in the south, they speak a common language, enjoy a rich oral literature, centered on poetic forms, organize communal life around similar, egalitarian social institutions, distinguish themselves from their Bantu and Nilotic neighbors by emphasizing a geneology stretching back to an original Arab ancestor, and manifest a powerful devotion to Islam. These cultural factors as well as the millennial occupation of contiguous territory and at least 500 years of intermittent conflict with the Christian occupants of the Ethiopian plateau make for an indisputable shared sense of nationhood.⁴¹

This "indisputable shared sense of nationhood," noted by the distinguished scholar, Tom J. Farer, extends well beyond Somalia's internationally recognized boundaries. Somali nationalism, expounded from Mogadishu, declares the vicarious allegiance of fellow Somalis inhabiting the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, the Ogaden of Ethiopian and the Federal Republic of Afars and Issas (Djibouti). For Somali nationalists

these areas constitute examples of "continuing colonial occupation." The desire for union of all these territories, by "peaceful and legal means," is stated in the introduction to the 1969 Constitution. The institutionalization of pan-Somalism is further reflected in the Somali flag which contains a five-pointed star signifying the three "occupied" areas noted above plus former British and Italian Somaliland. Additional examples include the size of the National Assembly, deliberately left open-ended at independence to allow for eventual representation of the external Somali territories, and the Somali legal system which confers citizenship on all ethnic Somalis regardless of residence.⁴² The goals of pan-Somalism conflict with the interests of the nations within which the occupied areas are located. In Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, Somali nationalism equals Somali expansionism. This view is shared by a majority of African nations which view Somalia's claims as a violation of the OAU convention on the inviolability of colonially established borders.

A second factor, both complementing and compounding the first, concerns the Somali nomads who inhabit the Ogaden on a seasonal basis in search of traditional pasture lands. With the onset of the rainy season the Somali herdsmen migrate throughout the Ogaden's grazing lands returning to family wells in Somalia as the dry season approaches. Various attempts by Haile Selassie and his revolutionary successors to assimilate these nomads into the Christian Ethiopian society or to disrupt their rugged lifestyle have encountered staunch

resistance from the fiercely independent tribesmen who share a common Islamic heritage with Somalia. Protecting the nomadic lifestyle of these fellow Somalis is a fundamental aspect of pan-Somalism.

Just how far Somalia should go in protecting these nomads provides the basis for a third destabilizing factor associated with the Ogaden conflict. Marxist (i.e., Pro-Soviet) elements within the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) argue against continuous pursuit of nationalistic goals in the Ogaden which jeopardizes the Soviet assistance so essential to Somalia's continued socialist development. Nationalists counter by citing the progress towards creating a national identity, unifying the country and abolishing clan allegiances that their programs have achieved. They also warn about becoming vassals of the Soviets whose restraint hinders the realization of their goals. Somalia's leader, Siad Barre perpetuates a delicate balance between his own nationalistic aspirations and those of the pro-Soviet faction within the SRC. To date, he has survived three known coup attempts (1970, 1971, 1978). His continued good fortune remains speculative.⁴³ The presence of the Afar and Oromo (Galla) liberation fronts on the Ogaden's north and south peripheries provides still another factor perpetuating instability in the region. The Degue's pronouncements recognizing the "right of nationalities to self-determination" and the celebration of Moslem holy days, their radio broadcasts and weekly newspapers produced in ethnic languages combined to revive the ethnic consciousness

within these regions. Meanwhile, the social reform programs initiated by the Dergue pose a threat to traditional Afar and Oromo landlords who utilize the rising tide of ethnic consciousness to rally support for the liberation of their tribal areas.⁴⁴ Somali support for these purely Ethiopian movements diffuses the forces available to counter their own activity in the Ogaden, thus eternizing the pattern of regional instability.

D. CONCLUSION

From this analysis of destabilizing events within the Red Sea basin nine basic patterns of instability emerge. These patterns, which are not mutually exclusive, include primordial, ethnic, cultural, religious, irredentist, interpersonal, urban versus rural, economic and ideological cleavages.

In Table 3.1 these patterns of instability are matched against twenty destabilizing events drawn from the recent history of the region. This table illustrates the mutual interaction of the various patterns and reveals interpersonal, primordial and ethnic rivalries as the most salient destabilizing factors. These factors are endemic to the region and unlikely to decrease in intensity in the near future. They are followed by economic, ideological and urban versus rural conflicts. These patterns are somewhat dynamic and may become less or more acute depending on regime policies and external assistance. Irredentism is both an indigenous and intense pattern of conflict. Yet, it is highly localized and figures prominently

in only a small number of conflicts. Nevertheless, within the Ogaden and Eritrea it is, perhaps, the most profound of all destabilizing factors. It is not likely that irredentism will abate in the near or mid term. Cultural and religious conflict has not played a major role in the majority of destabilizing events. This reflects the cultural and religious assimilation that has taken place due to centuries of interactions across the Bab el Mandeb.

The numerous opposition groups and liberation fronts which proliferate the Red Sea basin comprise the vehicles for aggregation and expression of the various destabilizing factors. Table 3.2 summarizes a current listing of these vehicles, functionally designated as destabilizing actors. The intractable linkages existing between these destabilizing factors and actors crosscut vertical and horizontal social strata and permeate territorial boundaries to produce incessant instability within the Red Sea basin. For external actors, with an interest in the region and requisite capabilities, such instability provides targets of opportunity for the pursuit of specific foreign policy goals.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

¹Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. 103. See also Vernon V. Aspaturian, Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971).

²Robert W. Stookey, Yemen: The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978), p. 225.

³Some of the agreements resulting from this initiative included: a friendship treaty with the USSR (renewing a 1928 treaty), an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia in 1956 and a \$16.3m credit from China. For an interesting chronology, see Charles B. McLane, Soviet-Third World Relations, Vol. 1: Soviet-Middle East Relations (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1973), p. 113.

⁴Richard F. Nyrop, et al., Area Handbook for the Yemens (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 41. See also Stookey, p. 226.

⁵Prior to his father's death, al-Badr had made two visits to the Soviet Union (1956 and 1958). See McLane, p. 113.

⁶Stookey, p. 239.

⁷In 1966 the leading factions of the royal family got together and decided to transfer the Imam's power to a six-man Imamate Council. Although the Imam was titular head of the council, Mohammad bin Husain, the council's deputy president, wielded all the power. Prince Hasan became the council's Prime Minister. See Stookey, p. 242 and Nyrop, p. 210.

⁸Nyrop, p. 46.

⁹New York Times, 11 January 1969; Stookey, p. 244.

¹⁰Discussions with Yemeni specialists at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London reveal that resistance to centralized control by the Yemeni tribesmen is as fierce now as during the Republican Revolution. The tribal leaders are willing to accept bribes and government assistance, but this acceptance begets loyalty only as long as tribal and governmental interests coincide. When these interests diverge, or a

better deal is offered, tribal leaders assert their independence and follow the path most beneficial to the tribe.

¹¹Economist, 23 May 1970, p. 42.

¹²Mordechai Abir, Oil, Power and Politics: Conflict in Arabia, the Red Sea and the Gulf (London: Frank Cass and Co., LTD, 1974), p. 79.

¹³Nyrop, p. 38.

¹⁴According to Abir (p. 80) the radical Palestinians who eventually formed the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Marxist-Leninist Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) had the most affect on the NLF ideologists. The NLF's continued links with radical Palestinians are reflected in the Palestinian Commando attack on the Israeli tanker launched from Perim in 1971 (n. 16 supra) and the Palestinian assassination of former Y.A.R. Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad al-Hajri in April 1977 (Keesings Contemporary Archives, 9 December 1977, p. 28715C).

¹⁵Abir, p. 81.

¹⁶Economist, 11 November 1969, p. 609.

¹⁷As a member of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office told me, South Yemen's inaccessible terrain is such that: "Wherever you look, the tribes are cut off by a desert or a bloody hill."

¹⁸New York Times, 7 August 1969.

¹⁹In separate discussions with an Eritrean Liberation Front leader and a Yemen specialist at the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) interpersonal rivalry emerged as the most salient level of conflict in South Yemen. The Eritrean leader who acted as a go-between in the brief Aden-Riyadh rapprochement, indicated that Ismail, originally from North Yemen, faces persistent trouble from the "Southerners" in PDRY. In his estimation, the current Prime Minister, Ali Nasir Mohammad, is the most likely candidate to oust Ismail. At FCO, Defense Minister Ali-Nasir Antar is believed to be Ismail's strongest rival.

²⁰New York Times, 7 August 1969; see also Nyrop, pp. 39, 119.

²¹According to British government officials, ninety percent of the border raids originate from South Yemen. The remaining ten percent are launched by dissident South Yemeni exiles living in North Yemen. These exiles have some links with FLOSY; however, this organization does not appear to be very strong at the moment.

²²Economist. 4 November 1972, p. 57; An-Nahar (Lebanon), 11 December 1972. Conceivably, a union of North and South Yemen would not be welcomed by Saudi Arabia. According to sources at Chatham House, Saudi concern emanates from a fear that such a union would be dominated by the more organized regime in Aden. A united and well organized Yemen, presumably backed by Soviet military power, would pose a serious threat to Saudi Arabia. Accordingly, one axiom of Saudi foreign policy is to prevent this union. This axiom may underlie the strong circumstantial evidence of a Saudi hand in the death of North Yemen's President, Ibrahim al-Hamdi in October 1977. President al-Hamdi had been moving towards a YAR-PDRY rapprochement, and was assassinated on the eve of a visit, the first by a President of the YAR, to South Yemen. In separate discussions with members of the (ELF-PLF) the Saudi role in al-Hamdi's death was reiterated.

²³Abir, p. 86.

²⁴NBC, "No More Viet Nams but...", 4 September 1979, Interview with Abdul Fatah Ismael.

²⁵Colin Legum and Bill Lee, Conflict in the Horn of Africa (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1977), p. 21.

²⁶Edward T. Wilson, Russia and Black Africa Before World War II (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1974), p. 58. Leontiev's strategy, similar to that used in the Russian victory over Napoleon, consisted of allowing the Italians to penetrate deeply into the country and then cut off their line of supply. According to Strategic Survey 1978 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), p. 95, the strategy employed by the Soviets in directing Ethiopian troops in the Ogaden in 1978 consisted of bypassing Somali troops, which had penetrated deep into the country, and then attacking their rear. The similarity of these two strategies is amazing.

²⁷Farer, p. 29.

²⁸Marina and David Ottaway, Ethiopia: Empire in Revolution (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978), p. 152.

²⁹Legum and Lee, p. 31.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 19, 23.

³¹Both Libya and South Yemen openly supported the Eritrean liberation movement as late as 1972. On 7 October 1972, Y.A.R. forces seized the South Yemeni island of Kamaran and confiscated \$2.6m worth of arms enroute from Libya to Eritrea (An-Nahar, 30 October 1972).

³²According to Colin Legum and Bill Lee, "Crisis in the Horn of Africa: International Dimensions of the Somali-Ethiopian Conflict," in Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1977-1978, ed. Colin Legum (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1979), p. A-41, Israel was forced to withdraw because of Foreign Minister Dayan's "awkward admission of his country's assistance to Ethiopia."

³³Sources within the (ELF-PLF) play down the impact of religious differences. They note that the Christian descendants of Aksum joined with Islamic Ottomans to oppose the Amhara in the past, much like the Christian/Islamic alliance in Eritrea today. They acknowledge the presence of some religious differences, but these have not been the cause of fissures in the liberation movement.

³⁴According to Marina and David Ottoway, p. 161, a major point of contention between the two men surfaced subsequent to the Khartoum conference, which met in September 1975 to discuss unification of the various liberation fronts. Afeworki, whose internal EPLF faction was not represented at the meeting, rejected the conference proposals and declared that Osman was not entitled to negotiate for the internal forces.

³⁵The Guardian, 3 June 1979, p. 7. During my discussions with members of the (ELF-PLF), they received a phone call from Khartoum relaying information that the pro-Iraqi or Baath faction had been rounded up and jailed. Apparently, President Numary, displeased with Iraq, was not impressed by the Baath faction and their sympathizers in Sudan.

³⁶According to a former Ethiopian Army General, Aman and Sisay were two extremely talented officers. Aman was strictly non-political and this led to his selection as head of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC). Aman was characterized as "the only man who could have achieved reconciliation with Eritrea." As a military officer (and not a politician) Aman was too stiff. According to his former commanding officer, this stiffness led to his downfall.

³⁷ Sources within the EDU claim that this shootout was thoroughly planned by Mengistu, who felt that things were going against him. Among those murdered during the shcotout were Teferi Bante and Mogus Wolde Michael. According to a former Ethiopian Army Officer, Teferi had been selected to lead the PMAC because he was "indecisive". This same officer, at onetime, had tried to have Teferi courtmartialed for incompetence. He summed up Teferi's qualities as follows: "He was stupid." A non-Ethiopian source who knew Teferi classified him as a "dulderhead". Mogus, a graduate of the Harar Military Academy was extremely talented. His death was considered a big loss to the revolution. When asked to comment on Mengistu this ex-Army officer pointed out that the Dergue leader was a Holitar officer (one who came up from the ranks and had little formal education). He is not intelligent and fears intellectuals. His main attribute is decisiveness. His survival stems from this quality. With respect to ideology, this source believes that Mengistu does not understand Communism or Marxism-Leninism. Nevertheless, inasmuch as Mengistu selected Marxism-Leninism, he will not "throw it away."

³⁸ Ottoway, p. 162.

³⁹ Charles B. McLane, Soviet Third World Relations, Vol. 3: Soviet-African Relations (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1974), p. 125. According to McLane, the counter-offer from the West amounted to \$15m.

⁴⁰ The Guardian, 17 July 1977, p. 13.

⁴¹ Farer, p. 50.

⁴² Irving Kaplan, et al., Area Handbook for Somalia (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 174-180.

⁴³ For an interesting comparison of Somalia's current leader Mohammad Siad Barre and the legendary father of Somali nationalism, Sayid Mohamman Cabdile Hassan, see David D. Laitin, "The War in the Ogaden: Implications for Siyaad's Role in Somali History," Journal of Modern African Studies 17 (March 1979): 95-115. In discussions with members of the ELF-PLF, Siad Barre's dilemma was described as follows: If he stops the WSLF, he risks a coup; if he allows them to continue, he risks an Ethiopian invasion. Nevertheless these sources indicated that, above all, Somalis are nationalists. Even the pro-Moscow faction of the SRC is composed of ardent nationalists.

⁴⁴ Ottoway, p. 91.

TABLE 3.1

MATCHING PATTERNS OF INSTABILITY AND DESTABILIZING EVENTS

	Economic	Urban vs Rural	Inter-personal	Irredentist	Religious	Cultural	Ethnic	Primordial	Ideological	
Yemeni Revolution 1962	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	
Iryani Coup 1967		x	x							
al-Hamdi Coup 1974	x	x					x	x		
al-Hamdi Assassination 1977		x	x		x		x	x		
al-Ghashmi Assassination 1978			x					x		
Attempts on life of Pres. Salleh			x				x			
South Yemeni Liberation Struggle	x	x				x			x	
Ouster of ash-Sha'bi 1969	x		x						x	
Ouster of Ali-Hatyham 1971	x		x						x	
Execution of President Ali 1978	x		x						x	
Border Warfare with North Yemen				x			x		x	
Dhofar Rebellion				x			x	x	x	
Overthrow of Haile Selassie 1974	x	x					x	x		
Execution of Gen. Aman Andam 1974			x				x	x		
Execution of Sisay Habate 1976			x					x		
Execution of Teferi Bante 1977			x					x	x	
Execution of Atnafu Abate 1977			x					x		
Eritrean Conflict	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		
Ogaden Conflict	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		
Coup Attempts on Siad Barre			x	x			x	x	x	
Totals	20	9	8	13	5	4	3	11	13	9

TABLE 3.2

DESTABILIZING ACTORS IN THE RED SEA BASIN

Liberation Movements Within Ethiopia:

Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) - Ahmed Nasser
Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) - Issayas Afeworki
Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Forces
(ELF-PLF) - Osman Saleh Sabby
Tigre Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) - Atakilte Ketsela
Afar Liberation Front (ALF) - Ali Mirreh, Sultan of
Aussa
Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) - Abdullah Hassan
Mahmoud
Abbe-Somali Liberation Front (ASLF) - Kbrahim Gutu Usu
Orome Liveration Front (OLF) - Larges group of country's
population.

Opposition To The Mengistu Regime in Ethiopia:

Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP)
Me'ison - Haile Fida (missing); Negeda Gobeize
Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) - Gen Iyassu Mengesha

Sudanese Movements Operating From Ethiopia:

Ansaris - Sadiq al-Mahdi, right wing Islamic
Anyanyas - Gordon Mortat, Christians

Opposition Movements in North Yemen:

Zaidi Tribal Chiefs - Abdallah al-Ahmar
National Democratic Front (NDF) - backed by South Yemen
Yemeni Labor Party - backed by South Yemen

Opposition Movements in South Yemen:

Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) - Abd
al-Qawwi Makkawi
United National Front - Makkawi plus Mohammad Ali Hatyham
and Qahtan al-Sha'bi
Dhofari Rebels

IV. EXPLOITING TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE RED SEA BASIN

The volatile patterns of instability existing in the Red Sea Basin generated numerous destabilizing events during the ensanguined summers of 1977 and 1978. The Mengistu regime in Addis Ababa already beset with bloody internal dissension, faced a Somali invasion in the Ogaden and a guerrilla offensive in Eritrea. Across the Bab el Mandeb the leaders of North and South Yemen were brutally murdered within the space of forty-eight hours.¹ Did these events produce targets of opportunity for Soviet strategy? The answer to this question is found by examining Soviet strategic incentives in the Red Sea Basin and Moscow's response to these latest examples of recurring inhabitant instability.

A. SOVIET STRATEGIC INCENTIVES IN THE RED SEA BASIN

Mohammad Heikal, adviser to the Egyptian government during the Nasser and Sadat regimes and a former editor of Al-Ahram recounts the following incident indicative of Soviet interest in the Red Sea basin:

One day early in the summer of 1977 President Sadat summoned the ambassador of South Yemen. He explained to him that there was an island off the coast of South Yemen on which he wished to place a contingent of Egyptian forces for the common defence of the Arab world. The ambassador reported this request back to Aden and in due course received a reply from President Salim Robaya Ali, to the effect that it was impossible to give Egypt the facilities asked for because there were already Soviet experts on the island. "Your reply," said President Sadat, "has made my mission easier. Tell your President it's not the island itself that interests me. It's the experts. I want to see Soviet experts out."²

Although Heikal's tale occurs in 1977, Soviet/Russian interest and intrigue in the Red Sea basin dates from the time of the early Tsars. The second Romanov Tsar, Alexis, entertained a proposal in 1674 for a joint Russian-Ethiopian alliance to counter the threat from the Ottoman Empire. Peter the Great, perhaps influenced by his protege, Ibrahim (a former Ethiopian slave), explored the possibilities of using the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria as a medium to establish an Ethiopian alliance.³ Orthodox Church reunification served as the ideological justification for this early Russian involvement in the Red Sea basin. Ethiopia, the focus of this reunification effort, provided a "base from which to disseminate the message of Orthodox Christianity throughout the interior of Africa."⁴

As in modern times, however, ideology merely acted as a cloak to shroud Russia's more realpolitik interests. These interests envisioned a Russian alliance with Christian Ethiopia as an effective means to foil Ottoman and later European influence in the Red Sea Basin. By 1882 the British, operating from their protectorates in Egypt and Aden controlled the approaches to the Red Sea. In response to the expanding influence of the British Empire, Russia exchanged various diplomatic missions with Ethiopia and collaborated with the French in an attempt to establish a colony and obtain port facilities in the vicinity of present day Djibouti.

In the Soviet era Marxism-Leninism replaces Orthodox Church reunification as the ideological pretense for Moscow's

strategic, political and economic interests in the Red Sea basin. Christian forces are now termed "progressive forces" and communist party members, vice clergy, accompany Soviet diplomatic missions to the area.

Both past and present Soviet involvement in the Red Sea basin emanates from its perceived national security interests in this area. From these national security interests Moscow derives strategic incentives based on the Soviet Union's national endowment, present state of internal development and the reality it perceives in this particular section of the global arena.

The Red Sea basin abuts the approaches to the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Kremlin leaders fully recognize this geopolitical reality:

There is no need to discuss the geographical and strategic position of the Red Sea. The maritime communications lines linking Asia and Europe pass through it from the Indian Ocean...there are 10 states and many important ports on the shores of the Red Sea. The ships of many countries and practically all the ships which pass through the Suez Canal sail its waters.⁵

As such, the Soviet Union perceives both offensive and defensive strategic incentives in the Red Sea basin.⁶ Defensively, Moscow must protect its maritime fleet which is the second largest in the world numbering more than 2,400 ships. Eighteen percent of this fleet, whose average age is less than 12 years, plies the Indian Ocean trade routes. The Soviet fishing fleet, the largest in the world, nets 20% of its catch from the Indian Ocean. In the context of defending its maritime trade,

Russian interest in the Suez Canal and Bab el Mandeb acquires significant proportions. Soviet vessels utilizing the Suez route for transit from the Black Sea to the Arabian Sea experience reductions of 9,000 miles in distance and approximately 24 days in sailing time. Russian warships headed for the Horn of Africa from the Baltic and Northern fleets save roughly 3,900 miles by using the Suez Canal.⁷ In light of these savings it is no wonder that:

In the pre-closure period (1960-66) the USSR was the second fastest growing user of the Suez Canal....By 1966 the Soviets were seventh in the table of users.⁸

Since the reopening of the Suez Canal, in 1975, the USSR has worked its way up to fifth position in the table of users, with over 11 million tons of shipping transiting the canal in 1977.⁹ Accordingly, the Soviet Union possesses a paramount interest in maintaining the Suez Canal open. Russia's interest in de Lesseps canal plans in 1858, Tsarist attempts to establish naval facilities in the Red Sea, the Soviet courtship of Egypt and Sudan in the 60's and early 70's, and their current activities on both sides of the Bab el Mandeb reflect a persistent and vital concern in this strategic waterway.

In addition to protecting its maritime fleet, Soviet defensive strategic incentives include monitoring of U.S. ballistic missile submarines and allied naval forces operating in the waters surrounding the Horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula. In support of this effort, Soviet oceanographic vessels conduct extensive surveys in the Indian Ocean.¹⁰ Data

from these surveys concerning current flows, bottom contour, temperature, density and salinity enhances the Soviet Navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) detection capability. In terms of evasion, this data enables Russian submarines:

to use the so-called "blind zones" where techniques of sonar location are rendered inaccurate and ineffective.¹¹

Additionally, Soviet interactions in the Red Sea Basin to obtain bases for logistic support, communications operating and intelligence gathering facilities all derive from this defensive strategic incentive. According to Admiral Nikolai Sergeev, Chief of the Soviet Naval Staff in 1973, this quest for "bases" has been the navy's most significant problem since the shift to forward deployment.¹²

Offensively, the Red Sea Basin provides strategic incentive to the USSR in terms of gaining future access to the region's fishing, mineral and petroleum resources as well as those of the Persian Gulf and the African continent. Moscow's interest in Africa's largely untapped mineral resources is reflected by the Soviet writer Evgenii Tarabrin who asserts:

...Africa currently contains over 80 percent of the capitalist world's known resources of cobalt and tantalum, 72 percent of its chromites, 60 percent of titanium, 40 percent of copper and manganese, 30 percent of bauxites, 27 percent of uranium, 20 percent of niobium and antimony and 13-15 percent of lithium, beryllium, tin, graphite and asbestos.¹³

With respect to petroleum, unless the Soviets rapidly develop the East Siberian oil reserves, which seems unlikely at present, they face the prospect of their own energy crisis

in the early 1980's. To avert this crisis and maintain industrial development, the USSR can be expected to compete for an increasing share of Persian Gulf oil exports.

Apart from ensuring access to these resources, the Soviet Union perceives a strategic incentive to deny their access to the industrialized West. A full 30 percent of all Indian Ocean maritime trade with Western Europe passes through the Red Sea basin.¹⁴ The Soviet weekly New Times echoed Kremlin interest in this strategic incentive by noting:

...what is most important (is) the fact that important sea lanes, linking the oil producing countries with America and Europe, pass through the region. Seventy percent of the raw materials imported by Western Europe are carried along these routes.¹⁵

This denial to the West could take the form of a Soviet naval blockade, mining of the Hormuz Straits and the Bab el Mandeb, or selective interdiction of Western maritime traffic. Inasmuch as these options constitute acts of war, it is unlikely the USSR would employ them in peacetime. To do so would be folly for the Soviets would then be subject to similar actions in the Bosphorus, at Gibraltar and the Skagerrak and Kattegat.

On the other hand, Moscow may be able to achieve the same degree of resource denial by installing and supporting anti-Western governments in the Middle East and Africa. Over a period of time these less belicose and more subtle means would also serve to ensure Soviet access to petroleum, mineral and fishing resources in the same areas.

B. THE DECISION TO SUPPORT ETHIOPIA OVER SOMALIA

In July 1974 Presidents Nikolai Podgorny and Mohammad Siad Barre "prompted by a desire to reinforce and consolidate the existing friendly relations between the USSR and the SDR (Somali Democratic Republic)," signed a treaty of Friendship and Cooperation on behalf of their respective nations. According to the joint Soviet-Somali communique appearing in Pravda, the treaty laid a "firm foundation for the further development of friendly relations" serving as a "contribution to the joint struggle against imperialism and colonialism."¹⁶ The treaty, designed to provide mutual benefits over a twenty year period, was a first for Moscow in black Africa and a political plus for Podgorny. Yet, within three years neither the highly touted treaty nor Nikolai Podgorny continued to serve as political functionaries in a volatile and uncertain Soviet-Somali relationship. By mid-1977 the Soviet Union, in an apparent turnaround, withdrew its support from the Barre regime, wherein "chauvinist expansionist sentiments" had "gained the upper hand," and pledged assistance to the progressive revolutionary forces in Ethiopia.¹⁷ Why did Moscow forsake considerable political, financial and military investment in Somalia to support that nation's ancient rival in the Horn? Did the Soviets switch sides in the Horn, or were they overcome by events as they attempted to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the revolution in Ethiopia? Perhaps Moscow was motivated by the strategic incentives presented by the possibility of counting these nations, and their

Red Sea littorals, in the socialist family. The Soviet decision to support Ethiopia could then be said to represent the rational selection of a specific course of action designed to maximize strategic goals and objectives in the Red Sea Basin. What role did the intrigues of bureaucratic politics play in Moscow's decision? Perhaps by analyzing Moscow's decision within the conceptual frameworks of the rational actor and bureaucratic politics models, one may find the answers to the foregoing questions.

1. The Soviet Union as a Rational Actor

In essence, the rational actor model analyzes a particular international event from the perspective of a unitary national actor selecting a value-maximizing course of action from among a given set of options. Prior to selection, each option is evaluated in the context of its perceived consequences. The course of action providing the least cost and most benefit, with respect to the deciding government's national security interests, becomes the most rational choice for the national decisionmaker. The rational actor paradigm assumes one set each of national security interests, options and estimated consequences.¹⁸ These assumptions require some degree of mental gymnastics when dealing with the Soviet Union. Although Soviet decisionmakers, in essence the Politburo, may agree on a single set of national security interests, factional alignments and bureaucratic coalitions within the Politburo preclude the production of a single set of options as well as a unified estimate of their costs and benefits.

To some extent the same is true in virtually any nation selected for analysis. As such, the options and perceived consequences in this discussion represent the common denominator outcome of the intergovernmental decisionmaking process.

A substantial Soviet presence in Ethiopia would enhance significantly the USSR's capability to pursue its strategic incentives in the Red Sea Basin. Ethiopia represents the heartland of the Horn of Africa. Its acquisition to the Soviet family along with Somalia and South Yemen would constitute a strategic bonanza for Moscow. Naval forces (Soviet, local or both) operating out of the Ethiopian port of Assab combined with those from Berbera and the South Yemeni island of Perim could exert undisputed control over the 12 km wide Bab el Mandeb shipping channel. Such control could facilitate blocking of this strait which, as Moscow conveniently reminded Cairo, "...would immediately place under foreign control the activity of the Suez Canal."¹⁹ Additionally, the Ethiopian ports of Assab and Massawa and the nearby Dahlac Islands would provide convenient entrepots for destabilizing operations in Saudi Arabia and North Yemen. Turning inward, Ethiopia's location in the Horn offers Moscow a strategic base from which to launch proselytizing missions throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, Ethiopia controls 80 percent of the water resources for Egypt and the Sudan.²⁰ Conceivably, such leverage would be useful to Moscow as it exerts pressure on these increasingly pro-Western nations.

Prior to 1974 Moscow's attraction for Ethiopia was effectively neutralized by the latter's staunchly pro-Western foreign policy. On September 12, 1974 the architect of that foreign policy, Emperor Haile Selassie, was deposed by a group of military officers known collectively as the Dergue. In the ensuing months the Dergue, by means of its administrative organ the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), instituted a series of sweeping socio-economic reform programs designed to effect a complete and radical break with Ethiopia's royal and feudal past.

As reports of land reform programs, nationalization of industries, mass arrests and executions continued to flow from Ethiopia, Kremlin leaders began to perceive the possibilities of a new era in Ethio-Soviet relations. When viewed in the context of the Russian historical legacy in Ethiopia, the overthrow of the Abyssinian monarch, the subsequent implementation of socialist programs and even the purges initiated by the Dergue inspired feelings of ideological affinity with the new revolutionaries in Addis Ababa. In the spring of 1976, signs of this ideological affinity surfaced in the Soviet media:

The Soviet Union views with great interest the efforts of the people of Ethiopia to build a new society...Although Western propaganda machinery is spreading false and malicious reports about Ethiopia, the Soviet people believe that these reports cannot prevent the Ethiopian people from following the socialist ideology.²¹

The preceding commentary also endorsed the Dergue's nine-point program for Eritrea which was viewed as "a special step to

find a peaceful solution to the problem in the administrative region..." This nine-point program was rejected outright by the Eritreans who had enjoyed Soviet support in years past.

In early July 1976 the ideological kinship had strengthened to the point that a senior Dergue member, Cpt Moges Wolde-Mikael, visited Moscow for six days of talks with Foreign Minister Gromyko and International Department Head Ponomarev. At a luncheon given for the Ethiopian delegation, Gromyko summed up Moscow's feelings and aspirations for the new revolutionary regime:

The history of relations between the peoples of our countries is rooted in the distant past and has strong traditions. Now that revolutionary reforms and socioeconomic changes of a progressive nature are taking place in Ethiopia our peoples have an ever greater opportunity to enhance Soviet-Ethiopian cooperation...with new, richer content.²²

Although future Soviet-Ethiopian relations appeared bright, Moscow's overall position in the Red Sea Basin looked bleak. By the end of 1976, Egypt had expelled all Soviet advisers and abrogated the Egyptian-USSR Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. President Numayri of Sudan, still smarting from an unsuccessful coup attempt in July 1976, joined Egypt's increasingly pro-Western movement. Eritrean liberation fighters had routed the Dergue's hastily assembled and untrained peasant army and were gaining ground throughout Asmara. Somalia, the USSR's biggest investment in the Horn, was growing more and more perturbed with Moscow's restraint against operations in the Ogaden. As one Somali officer bemoaned:

The Soviets stopped us from attacking Ethiopia when it was most vulnerable. They may well have made us miss a historic opportunity.²³

A large portion of Ethiopia's vulnerability resulted from internal power struggles within the Dergue. On November 23, 1974 the PMAC's first chairman, Gen. Aman Mikael Andom, was shot while resisting arrest by his fellow officers. On July 13, 1976, while Moscow was endorsing the nine-point program for Eritrea, the Dergue executed a sponsor of that program, Maj. Sisay Habate. On February 3, 1977, PMAC chairman, Gen. Teferi Bante, and the Dergue's former emissary to Moscow, Cpt. Moges Wolde-Mikael, were dispatched in typically ensanguined fashion during an hour-long shootout at the old palace of Emperor Menelik. The following day the Dergue's new leader, Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam, called for the arming of the Ethiopian people in order to protect the nation's "socialist revolution."²⁴ Additional factors contributing to Ethiopia's vulnerability included: opposition from the right-wing Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) and the left-wing Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP), conflicts with the Oromo and Afar liberation movements, and the perennial conflagrations in Eritrea and the Ogaden. By early 1977 the combination of these factors placed intense pressure on the unstable regime in Ethiopia. As the distinguished Africanist Colin Legum noted in late January, "the Addis Ababa Government is probably in shakier condition than at any time since it supplanted the late Emperor Haile Selassie..."²⁵ A change of administrations in Washington further exacerbated

the Dergue's precarious situation. The new American President, a staunch advocate of human rights, took an understandably dim view of the PMAC's standard operating procedures. If the arms and aid umbilical with Washington were severed, the Dergue could not hope to survive.

The tenuous situation in Ethiopia, viewed in the context of Moscow's strategic incentives for the Red Sea Basin, posed a serious dilemma for the Soviet national actor. Clearly, Mengistu's regime would need substantial assistance to survive. Yet, how could Moscow provide that assistance to strategically significant Ethiopia without forfeiting the sizeable investment in Somalia? What options did the Soviet national actor consider in its search for a solution to this dilemma?

a. Option One

Moscow's first option would be to lift restraints from Somalia and allow events to take their natural course in the Horn. Somalia's Soviet equipped and trained armed forces would easily overtake the disorganized and internally fissured Ethiopian Army. Once Somali insurgents had reached Harar, Soviet restraint would be reapplied. An additional aspect of this option envisaged continued support for the Marxist Eritrean forces. Cuban troops, sympathetic to the Eritrean cause, backed up by Soviet naval units would assist the Eritrean guerrillas. Mengistu's regime could not survive a sustained campaign on two fronts. His successors, eager for peace, would gladly accept Moscow's proposals for a

reconciliation with Eritrea and a status quo in the Ogaden. Soviet gains in Somalia would be reinforced and access to Ethiopia's/Eritrea's Red Sea ports would be obtained. Pursuing this option would be consistent with previous support for Eritrea and Somalia, and would enhance the USSR's position in the Arab world where Ethiopia's links with Israel are well known.

Despite these benefits, the costs associated with this option were prohibitive. Supporting a Somali insurgency into the Ogaden and continued backing for Eritrea would place the USSR squarely at odds with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAU viewed these operations as violations of its convention on the inviolability of colonially inscribed borders. Additionally, there was no guarantee that Somali nationalists, inspired by an Ogaden victory, would not launch subsequent military campaigns to regain territory in Djibouti and the Northern Frontier District of Kenya. Moscow's stake in black Africa surely would suffer from such a confrontation. Furthermore, the possibility of American support for Ethiopia could not be ruled out. Should Mengistu fall, his successors might well be moderate nationalists. As such, their appeals for arms to stem Arab aggression, backed by strong Israeli sentiments, would be difficult for the new American President to deny. Finally, an Eritrean victory would place still another Arab state on the Red Sea littoral. Moscow's scorecard with the other Arab nations of the Red Sea basin was not impressive. Anti-Soviet sentiments

were strong in Egypt and Sudan where a mutual defense pact was concluded in January 1977. Saudi Arabia remained staunchly pro-West and was luring an increasingly moderate North Yemen away from the blandishments of Soviet support. Should an independent Eritrea join its Arab brethren in their calls to preserve Arab dominance in the Red Sea, Moscow's ability to pursue its regional strategic incentives would be seriously handicapped.

b. Option Two

A second option might consist of providing massive support for Ethiopia while curtailing arms supplies to Somalia and Eritrea. In so doing, Moscow would help to sever Ethiopia's ties to Washington, and thus become firmly established in the strategic heartland of the Horn. Soviet support for Ethiopia would enhance the Kremlin's political image in black Africa. Not only would Moscow be upholding the OAU convention on standing borders, but it would also demonstrate the USSR's capability to deliver while Ethiopia's traditional ally, the U.S. was bogged down in an apparently unresolvable conflict over national security and human rights interests. Abyssinian troops with Cuban reinforcements and Soviet arms could easily overtake the Somali insurgents whose capacity to resist, in the absence of Soviet arms, was bound to decrease in the near term. Meanwhile, a reconciliation with Eritrea could be worked out that would grant the "administrative region" some degree of autonomy. Soviet support for Ethiopia would strengthen the ideological affinities between the two

nations. The peoples of the Soviet Union would be assisting the young Ethiopian revolutionaries on the progressive path of Marxist-Leninist development.

Despite the benefits and the ideological blessing, the costs associated with this course of action were only slightly less prohibitive than those of option one. Massive support for Ethiopia, at the expense of Somalia and Eritrea, would constitute a complete reversal in Soviet policy. The USSR's enemies in the Red Sea Basin could cite, with justification, the fickle and untrustworthy nature of Soviet alliances. Moscow's investment in Somalia, including the substantial naval facilities at Berbera, would certainly be lost. The counter to this loss, Soviet bases at Assab and Massawa, would materialize only upon achieving a solution to the Eritrean problem. However, reconciliation between Ethiopia and Eritrea seemed remote. Eritrea flatly rejected the nine-point peace program of May 1976, and Mengistu signified his desire for complete repression of the "shiftas" (bandits) by liquidating all members of the Dergue's reconciliation faction. A military victory in Eritrea would be difficult to achieve. Cuba and South Yemen maintained ties with various Eritrean liberation groups, and would be reluctant to turn on their comrades in arms. Moscow might have to go it alone in Eritrea. Such intervention could result in a Vietnam-type quagmire for Soviet forces.

Substantial Soviet military support for Ethiopia would fuel pan-Arab sentiments in nationalist Somalia and

among the Arab nations assisting Eritrea. Driven by these sentiments, Somalia would be coaxed into joining the pro-Westward movement of Sudan, Egypt and North Yemen. Eventually this movement, further stimulated by Israel's links with Ethiopia, could lead to the transformation of the Red Sea into an Arab lake. Genuine Soviet concern for just such a transformation and a growing interest in Ethiopia surfaced in this Izvestiya editorial:

First of all, certain circles in the Arab countries have coined the term "Arab lake" with respect to the Red Sea...which obviously reeks of nationalism, all the more so since not all the littoral countries are Arab, to say nothing of the nationality of the ships passing through the Red Sea...But some people need this emphasis on the Red Sea being an "Arab lake" in order to play on nationalism and set the Arab countries on Ethiopia which has a 625-mile coastline on the Red Sea...²⁶

Finally, curtailing Soviet arms to Somalia would not necessarily mean the end of fighting in the Ogaden. On the contrary, it would free Somalia to fill its arms needs from the West or, still worse, from China. Moscow's capability to pursue its strategic incentives in the Red Sea Basin could hardly benefit from an increased Western or Chinese presence in Somalia.

c. Option Three

As a third option, Moscow could support both Ethiopia and Somalia. Severing Addis Ababa's arms umbilical with Washington would constitute the initial step in this course of action. Once this break was complete, the USSR would become the principle arms supplier to the various antagonists

in the Horn of Africa. As such, Moscow could provide the support required to maintain the Addis Ababa regime while playing the role of mediator in Eritrea and the Ogaden. Cuban troops would comprise the peacekeeping force until both disputes were resolved. Inasmuch as Ethiopia, Somalia and a substantial portion of the Eritrean liberation forces had professed adherence to the Marxist tenets of scientific socialism, Moscow would merely have to provide encouragement for all three factions along the inevitable path of history. Cautious diplomacy and the threat of arms curtailment comprised the elements of this encouragement. If successful, Moscow would strengthen its influence in Ethiopia, gain access to Assab and Massawa and preserve its investment in Somalia. Pax Sovietica would reign in the Horn of Africa. The USSR's image in black Africa would be greatly enhanced as a result of its role as peacemaker in support of the OAU convention on colonial boundaries. Ethiopian control of Assab and Massawa would be insured, and a placated vice alienated Somalia would be reluctant to close ranks with its Arab brethren. The mechanism for implementing Pax Sovietica in the Horn involved the creation of a federation composed of Ethiopia (including the administrative region of Eritrea), Somalia and South Yemen. Upon gaining independence in June 1977, the French Territory of Afars and Issas also would be asked to join. With her clients gathered under one Soviet umbrella, Moscow would become the chairman of the board in the Horn. Disputes among subsidiary clients would be handled internally while the

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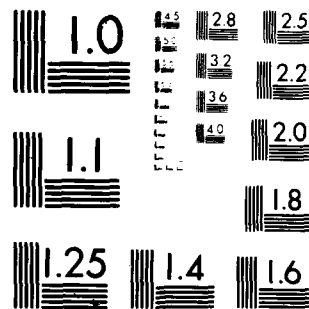
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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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corporate chairman would gain from the assets of each country.

Estimated costs associated with this option were less substantial than the foregoing alternatives. Yet, they still merited consideration. Somalia's adherence to scientific socialism is heavily tinged with nationalism. It is unlikely that Mogadishu would easily surrender its claims to the Ogaden in lieu of the putative benefits of a federation. The Eritrean conflict was entering its sixteenth year, and Moscow's ability to reconcile the intractable cleavages between Addis Ababa and Asmara was speculative at best. Moreover, Mengistu's policies in Eritrea were strikingly similar to the repressive tactics employed by his monarchical predecessor. The most realistic chance for a reconciliation with Eritrea would seem to have died with Teferi Bante and Moges Wolde-Michael in February. The USSR would have to pursue an extremely delicate course in its negotiations with Somalia. Too much pressure from Moscow would drive Siad Barre into the Saudi embrace and cause him to seek arms supplies from Washington or Peking. Signs of a growing uneasiness in Soviet-Somali relations had already begun to appear. Press coverage of the visit to Moscow in late May 1977 by Somali first Vice-President, Mohammad Ali Samantar discussed "urgent international issues" with "particular attention" accorded to the Horn of Africa. In its coverage of the visit Moscow Radio noted that Brezhnev and Samantar "...devoted much time to the issues concerning the Horn of Africa":

This issue had to be discussed because imperialist and reactionary forces have stepped up their aggression in the region with the aim of starting another war.²⁷

Despite this uneasiness and the previously noted drawbacks, support for both Ethiopia and Somalia in a federated Horn of Africa constituted the most rational choice for the Soviet national actor in the late spring of 1977. The head of Moscow's Africa Institute, Anatoly Gromyko, echoed these sentiments in an interview with a Western news correspondent:

In spite of historical contradictions between Somalia and Ethiopia, there are progressive forces in both, able to sort out their social, political and economic problems. Here we are optimists: we think it is possible to have a federation in the Horn of Africa.²⁸

The Soviet Union pursued this course of action throughout the summer of 1977. However, as the summer wore on it became increasingly apparent that the "progressive forces" in Somalia and Ethiopia were not able to "sort out" their problems. Yet, withdrawal of Soviet support for Somalia (in favor of Ethiopia) would turn Siad Barre towards Washington or Peking. The new American President had already ordered his National Security Adviser and Secretary of State to "move in every possible way to get Somalia to be our friend."²⁹ Within four days of Ali Samantar's return from Moscow in June 1977, a 15 member Somali delegation left for a 30 day visit to Peking.³⁰ The prospect of seeing the enormous Soviet investment in Somalia fall into Washington's or, still worse, Peking's hands was too hard to swallow. Soviet strategic incentives could hardly be served by such a phenomena.

Accordingly, Moscow felt compelled to continue support for Somalia, along with Ethiopia, as long as there was a chance of the U.S. or China footing Somalia's arms bills. Meanwhile, Moscow Radio broadcasts praised Soviet-Somali relations, which were "developing well"; warned of "imperialist and reactionary forces" in the Horn; and reminded the Somali people "The USSR has already assisted in 15 major projects in Somalia".³¹

Unfortunately for Moscow, Siad Barre was not receptive to such reminders. By mid-July, encouraged by overtures of U.S. arms support and Saudi backing, Barre launched a massive incursion into the Ogaden. Barre's exuberance seemed boundless. According the London Telegraph of 17 July he had even gone so far as to order the Soviets to leave Somalia within three months.³² Though things looked bleak for Moscow in July, this complexion changed significantly by summer's end. On 9 August the OAU Committee of Good Offices ruled in favor of Ethiopia, claiming Somalia's incursions into the Ogaden violated the African convention to respect colonially inscribed borders. In early September, Washington, perhaps, influenced by the OAU decision and negative press reaction to its July arms offer, and surprised by the magnitude of Somali forces in the Ogaden withdrew its offer of arms support.³³ Washington's reversal coupled with Peking's incapability to fulfill Somalia's arms requests meant that the possibility of superpower confrontation in the Horn was virtually nonexistent. As such, the Soviet

Union's strategic incentives favored support for Ethiopia over Somalia, whose arms supply line terminated in Moscow. This being the case, option two emerged as the rational choice for the Soviet national actor. On 1 September Siad Barre returned from Moscow where his request for continued arms shipments was turned down. The Soviets had now linked these arms shipments to Somalia's entrance in the previously mentioned federal union which Barre rejected. Arms shipments to Somalia ceased, and massive amounts of Russian arms and Cuban troops were shipped and airlifted to Ethiopia. This military assistance continued as the fighting in the Horn reached its apex in early 1978. Estimates on the enormity of this support include: \$2 billion in arms, 17,000-20,000 Cuban troops, 300 tanks, 3,000 Soviet military technicians and 3-4 Soviet generals to direct ground strategy in the Ogaden.³⁴ From the Soviet perspective, anything less, at this time, would have seriously jeopardized Moscow's strategic gains in Ethiopia. The Soviet position in Somalia had deteriorated considerably, perhaps beyond repair. Accordingly, Russian gains in Ethiopia had to be preserved. Otherwise, the USSR's strategic interests in the Red Sea Basin would be dealt a devastating blow.

Moscow is still pursuing this second option in the Horn of Africa, though major fighting has tapered off since the spring of 1978. Nevertheless, as the costs associated with this course of action continue to mount, the rationality wanes. Nearly 15,000 Cuban troops are required

to maintain what only can be termed a very loose status quo in the Ogaden. The fighting in Eritrea continues, and has claimed the life of at least one senior Russian officer.³⁵

In view of these rising costs, the Soviet national actor may be forced to chart a different course in the Horn of Africa. The smuggling into Ethiopia of Mengistu's rival, Negede Gobezie, by Cuba and South Yemen in May 1978 indicates alternative options are being considered.³⁶

2. The Impact of Bureaucratic Politics

Gazing beneath the image of the national actor one sees, in the Soviet Union, a monstrous and developed bureaucracy administered by an aging collective leadership wherein Leonid Brezhnev reigns as primus inter pares. Various studies by Soviet scholars reveal that the intrigues of bureaucratic politics bear directly on Soviet decisionmaking in both the domestic and international arenas.³⁷ It is difficult to determine the exact role of bureaucratic politics in the decision to support Ethiopia. However, judging from past performance, one would expect Brezhnev to utilize the crisis in the Horn as a means of enhancing his position within the Soviet bureaucracy. In the aftermath of Khrushchev's downfall Brezhnev "showed a hitherto unsuspected gift for manoeuvring." By manipulating bureaucratic elites Brezhnev succeeded in demoting Shelepin and transferring Kosygin and Podgorny from party to government positions.³⁸ In the Czechoslovak crisis Brezhnev wavered between interventionist and non-interventionist coalitions for most of the spring and summer of 1968. The

patient and crafty Brezhnev finally joined the interventionist coalition "...in the face of signals and pressures from several powerful Soviet bureaucracies."³⁹ By responding to these bureaucratic pressures and signals, Brezhnev emerged from the Czechoslovak crisis in a much stronger position as evidenced by the appearance of "The Brezhnev Doctrine" in November 1968.

In 1977 there remained but one impediment to the consolidation of Brezhnev's power as top bureaucrat in the Soviet collegium. As Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Nikolai Podgorny personified that impediment. Administratively, Brezhnev's personalized draft of the new constitution cleared the way for him to assume the dual roles of head of state and party.⁴⁰ However, when approached in early 1977 Podgorny refused to step down.⁴¹ Instead, he left on a combination goodwill and fact-finding mission to four African states lasting from 17 March to 2 April. It is conceivable that Brezhnev used the convenience of Podgorny's absence and the rising tensions with Somalia to rally anti-Podgorny support among the bureaucratic elite. As the man most closely identified with Soviet African policy, Podgorny was liable to attack for setbacks in this area. One can imagine Brezhnev blaming Podgorny for such failures as Sadat's abrogation of the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, in March 1976, and the bungling of the Numary coup attempt, in July 1976, which lead to Sudan's subsequent turn to the West. Additionally, Brezhnev could warn of a growing anti-Soviet

momentum resulting from these failures, as characterized by the Egyptian-Sudanese military accord of January 1977 and the March 1977 treaty between Egypt, Syria and Sudan to preserve Arab control of the Red Sea basin.⁴² Brezhnev could argue that if Podgorny were allowed to continue, Somalia would be the next to go and the Soviet Union's largest investment in black Africa would be lost. Perhaps it was already too late to save Somalia. Siad Barre had rejected the Soviet proposal for a Federal Union of Somalia, South Yemen, Ethiopia and the French Territory of Afars and Issas offered by Castro during a secret meeting at Aden in early March.⁴³ In late March Siad Barre met in Taiz to discuss Red Sea security with the leaders of Sudan, North and South Yemen.⁴⁴

Perhaps realizing his personal stake in Somalia, Podgorny made an unscheduled stop in Mogadishu on his way home from Africa. The unscheduled stop resulted in two days of talks, with Siad Barre, after which Podgorny invited Barre to Moscow.⁴⁵ The length of these unscheduled talks coupled with the invitation to Moscow suggests that Podgorny was unsuccessful in his discussions with Barre, and, in anticipation of Brezhnev's tactics, wanted the Somali leader in Moscow to prove that it was Barre and not Podgorny who was losing Somalia. While enroute to Moscow, Podgorny also stopped in Tashkent where he met with Uzbekistan Communist Party leader, Rashidov.⁴⁶ Podgorny's meeting with Rashidov may have been nothing more than a formality resulting from a required fuel stop. However, one might speculate that Rashidov, a candidate member

of the Politburo, could have briefed Podgorny on Brezhnev's latest manipulations as well as his own discussions with a delegation of Somali Socialist Revolutionary Party (SSRP) members visiting Uztag on 30 March. Perhaps, if Barre could not be brought into line, the SSRP could be persuaded to remove him?

With the exception of Minister of the Maritime Fleet, T.B. Guzhenko, Podgorny's entourage in Africa consisted of deputy ministers. The main bureaucratic elites thus remained in Moscow where Brezhnev could appraise them of the benefits of providing "fraternal assistance" to Ethiopia. The fishing industry, already drawing 20 percent of its catch from the Indian Ocean, would gain access to Ethiopia's rich coastal waters which are largely unexploited due to the lack of indigenous demand. Defense and heavy industry chiefs presumably would receive increased outlays to provide arms to the Mengistu regime. The Navy and Maritime fleets would benefit from utilization of Ethiopia's two seaports, Assab and Massawa. Both these ports possess mechanized cargo handling equipment and are capable of accommodating deep sea vessels.⁴⁷ Assab with its Soviet built refinery could become a valuable logistics base, possibly another Berbera.⁴⁸ Ground force commanders encouraged by the Cuban victory in Angola would be eager to test new tactics in Ethiopia. International Department head, Boris Ponomarev, had participated in the first series of discussions held with Dergue members, in Moscow, in July 1976. For Ponomarev, revolutionary Ethiopia's image as a bastion

against European colonialism would provide the International Department with a highly regarded base from which to support national liberation movements in black Africa. Although this would mean severing Moscow's relations with the liberation fronts in Eritrea, the perceived payoffs from Ethiopia were more than adequate. The aging ideologue, Mikhail Suslov, a Brezhnev associate, could be counted on to derive adequate ideological justification for supporting the fledgling Ethiopian revolutionaries. Suslov could justify Ethiopia's credentials by citing Mengistu's decision to follow the path of "scientific socialism" in 1976. He could also refer to the joint Ethiopian-Cuban communique of March 1977 which expressed both nations' desire to "struggle...for the construction of a socialist society."⁴⁹ Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko, also participated in the 1976 discussions with visiting Dergue members. Presumably, Gromyko could use the same communique to point out the commonality in Soviet and Ethiopian foreign policy objectives vis-a-vis Southern Africa, the Middle East, Indian Ocean and Red Sea.⁵⁰

Supposedly, these and other putative bureaucratic payoffs were not proffered by Brezhnev in terms of support for Ethiopia over Somalia, but rather in the context of support for Ethiopia and removal of Podgorny in order to prevent the loss of Somalia. Podgorny bypassed Ethiopia on his African tour. Although this was done probably to allay Barre's concern over Moscow's inclinations towards Addis Ababa, Brezhnev could have used this gesture to create the impression

that Podgorny was unwilling to recognize the bureaucratic benefits to be derived from Soviet support for Ethiopia. Podgorny's praise for Ethiopia at a Moscow state dinner for Mengistu in early May was, perhaps, a last ditch attempt to overcome that impression.⁵¹

Brezhnev also may have used Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, to further separate Podgorny from the Soviet bureaucracy. Prior to returning to Cuba after his whirlwind tour of Africa in March-April 1977, Castro flew to Moscow for a debrief with Kremlin leaders. Castro had visited both Ethiopia and Somalia during his African "samba"; thus, unlike Podgorny, he could provide first hand insight on the status of revolutionary Ethiopia. It is conceivable that the Cuban leader reported favorably on Mengistu, for it was Barre the nationalist who rejected Castro's mediation efforts in mid-March. Judging from the eventual level of Cuban forces in the Ogaden, Castro must have fully endorsed intervention in Ethiopia during his "unofficial friendly visit" to Moscow in April 1977. This endorsement tended to reinforce the perceived payoffs for the Soviet bureaucrats, while further alienating Podgorny. There were also payoffs for Castro. The Cuban leader left Moscow with a fresh set of agreements which included: a trade protocol designed to increase Soviet-Cuban trade by 10 percent over 1976, a contract to build a 1,700 MW nuclear power complex in Cuba, an agreement to reconstruct Jose Marti International Airport, and an accord designed to increase Soviet industrial and agricultural aid.⁵² All this

is in addition to the nearly \$2 billion annual subsidy provided by Moscow to sustain the Cuban economy.

Viewed in a broader perspective, Castro's report to the Soviet bureaucratic elite, coming at the same time as Podgorny's, could be taken as Brezhnev's way of snubbing his old rival. Was not the President of the Soviet Union competent enough to conduct his own fact-finding tour of Africa? Did Podgorny's report have to be corroborated by the relatively young and certainly brash Castro? Clearly, for Podgorny the handwriting was on the wall, and Brezhnev was holding the pen.

The foregoing, of course, is speculative. Bureaucratic politics in the Soviet Union - the struggle for power in the Kremlin - persists as one of that nation's most closely guarded secrets. On 25 May 1977, Nikolai Podgorny was "freed from his duties" as a member of the Politburo. After 17 years in the Politburo, Podgorny did not leave at his own request, but was voted out by his fellow bureaucrats. Podgorny's ouster less than two months after his return from Africa suggests that the brewing crisis in the Horn acted as a peripheral catalyst to secure his dismissal.⁵³ The decision to support Ethiopia, and placate Somalia, emerged as the byproduct of this catalyst and the bureaucratic mixture into which it was placed. In the same month that Podgorny was ousted, the Soviet Union and Ethiopia reportedly signed a secret military agreement, and the first contingent of Cuban advisers arrived in Addis Ababa.⁵⁴ To be sure, the decision to support Ethiopia

played but a small role in the bureaucratic manipulation that secured Podgorny's downfall. However, with Podgorny now out of the picture, Brezhnev could assume the dual roles of head of party and state. He did this on 17 June.⁵⁵ From then on the new constitution, the main event for 1977, met little or no resistance; becoming effective on October 7. Interestingly enough, the same Central Committee plenum that dismissed Podgorny elevated a reported Brezhnev protege, Konstantin Rusakov, to the Party Secretariat.⁵⁶ Rusakov, who participated in the April discussions with Castro, became head of the department responsible for liaison with communist bloc nations. Perhaps this was Rusakov's payoff for supporting Brezhnev's stand on Ethiopia and against Podgorny.⁵⁷

The decision to support Ethiopia acquired substantial proportions during implementation, begun in the latter half of 1977. In the interim, the Soviet bureaucracy continued to provide arms and assistance to the Barre regime in an attempt to preserve the Somali investment. Despite Barre's July incursion into the Ogaden, Soviet arms shipments continued to arrive in Somalia until mid-October.⁵⁸ By the beginning of September, Moscow felt reasonably sure that its major rivals in Washington and Peking would not fulfill Somalia's arms requests.⁵⁹ The Soviet bureaucracy could now put its full weight behind support for Ethiopia, fully confident that the Somali offensive could not be sustained for much longer, and that the risk of superpower confrontation was minimal.

Precise analysis of Kremlin decisionmaking remains virtually impossible. The aging Soviet kollegiya shrouds its inner workings in a cloak of secrecy thoroughly reinforced by a closed society and a controlled information system. As such, the exact factors which precipitated Moscow's decision to support Ethiopia may never be known. However, when this decision is viewed within the conceptual frameworks of the rational actor and bureaucratic politics paradigms certain conclusions can be drawn.

The initial decision to support Ethiopia was not made in the context of withdrawing support for Somalia. On the contrary, Moscow envisioned supporting both nations. By providing assistance to both Ethiopia and Somalia, Moscow perceived an opportunity to significantly enhance its capability to pursue its strategic incentives in the Red Sea Basin. From an ideological standpoint, both Somalia and Ethiopia publicly avowed their decision to follow the path of scientific socialism. Accordingly, the tenets of Marxism-Leninism were deemed sufficient to surmount ancient rivalries between both nations and also resolve the enigmatic struggle in Eritrea. For the Soviet national actor, the most rational course of action would be to support both nations using the mechanism of a federation in the Horn of Africa.

The intrigues of bureaucratic politics also impacted on the Soviet decision to support Ethiopia and Somalia. Once appraised of the possible payoffs, Kremlin bureaucratic

elites rallied behind their leader, Leonid Brezhnev, in an effort to provide "fraternal assistance" to Ethiopia while saving the investment in Somalia. One of the political casualties resulting from the pulling and hauling within the Soviet bureaucracy was Nikolai Podgorny.⁶⁰ The downfall of Podgorny enabled Brezhnev to assume the dual roles of head of state and party. Furthermore, with Podgorny out of the Politburo the adoption of Brezhnev's new constitution was assured. The crisis in the Horn of Africa acted as a peripheral catalyst in the bureaucratic manipulation which secured Podgorny's dismissal. The decision to support Ethiopia and placate Somalia emerged as a byproduct of the interaction of this catalyst and the bureaucratic mixture into which it was placed.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1977 continued support for both Ethiopia and "nationalist" Somalia became increasingly difficult. Marxism-Leninism alone was not sufficient to overcome intractable differences in Eritrea and fundamental cleavages between Ethiopia and Somalia. Those ideological considerations that remained favored "progressive" Ethiopia over "chauvinist and expansionist" Somalia. By mid-July, as Somalia mounted a large offensive in the Ogaden, the Soviet national actor was faced with another crucial decision. Despite the Somali threat to Soviet gains in Ethiopia, the USSR's strategic incentives dictated continued support to both sides, while gauging the measure of response from Washington and Peking. When it became clear that Somalia's arms

requests would not be filled by China or the U.S., Moscow's course in the Horn became clear. In the context of fulfilling its strategic incentives, the Soviet Union decided to place full support behind the young Ethiopian revolutionaries.

C. INSTABILITY IN ADEN: THE SOVIET EXPLOITIVE VEHICLE

The strategic significance of Aden, positioned astride the sea lines of communication passing through the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, long has been the subject of intense interest for aspiring naval powers. The British articulated this interest by developing Aden colony, and extending their control to the geostrategically located islands of Kamaran, Perim and Socotra. From Perim and Kamaran the British Navy could exert undisputed control over maritime traffic passing through the Red Sea. Socotra's two RAF airfields and various anchorages served to assist British efforts to monitor shipping in the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean. With the British withdrawal in November 1967, Aden and the strategic islands fell under the domain of the newly created People's Republic of South Yemen. The Soviet Union, eager to lessen its commitment with the beleaguered revolutionary government in Sanaa, moved quickly to fill the vacuum left by the British.

...the creation of massive arms dumps in South Yemen was begun within a few weeks of Britain's withdrawal in 1967...Throughout 1968 a Russian or other Communist bloc cargo ship arrived to unload at Aden every other week. Local police and troops sealed off streets around the harbor while convoys of lorries moved the arms to the dumps.⁶¹

Soviet naval vessels made their first port calls to Aden in June 1968, and the first military assistance agreement between Moscow and the new republic was concluded in August.⁶²

With their expulsion from Somalia in November 1977, the Soviets attached heightened proportions to the strategic significance of South Yemen. Berbera was lost and the Eritrean ports of Assab and Massawa were the scenes of intense conflict. South Yemen allowed the USSR to transfer equipment and personnel from the hastily vacated base at Berbera. Additionally, they granted Moscow the use of Aden's air and port facilities for the transshipment of materials to Ethiopia. Nevertheless, despite these concessions, the Soviet Union by the end of 1977 still had not secured unlimited access to the airport, port and naval base facilities at Aden.⁶³ Thus, without a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation or any formal agreement on the use of Aden, Moscow's continued access could be terminated abruptly by South Yemen's radical ruling council.

The leader of the ruling council, President Salim Robaye Ali, was not apt to ease Kremlin fears. More nationalist than Marxist-Leninist, Ali chose to pursue a more moderate and pragmatic foreign policy designed to attract the financial assistance required to salvage Aden's deteriorating economy. Ali sought closer ties with Saudi Arabia, establishing diplomatic relations with Riyadh in 1976. In an effort to expand their bilateral relations, an agreement was reached in 1977 sending Saudi oil to the underutilized ex-British Petroleum

refinery in Aden.⁶⁴ Under Ali's direction, the PDRY was responding to joint efforts by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Sudan to mediate the longstanding quarrel with Oman, over Aden's support for the Dhofari rebels. In June 1977 the Kuwaiti newspaper As-Siyassa reported a secret meeting in Riyadh between the foreign ministers of South Yemen and Oman aimed at resolving the mutual grievances of both Arab nations.⁶⁵ With respect to North Yemen, President Ali established a continuing dialogue with his counterpart in Sanaa, Ahmad Husain Ghashmi. The South Yemeni President also hinted at better relations with the West and arranged for a U.S. negotiating team to visit Aden in June 1978.

Ideologically, Ali favored the Maoist brand of communism which stressed self-reliance. In 1971 he drew upon the Chinese model to establish the people's militia as a means of taking the revolution to the countryside. The influx of Chinese military advisers tasked with organizing and arming this militia could hardly please Moscow.⁶⁶

Kremlin concern with South Yemen was compounded by the nation's governmental structure, as it appeared in early 1978. Under this set up the positions of head of party and head of state were filled by separate individuals. Indeed, South Yemen had not even formed a vanguard party, recommended by Moscow as a means to institutionalize the revolution. The closest approximation of a vanguard party consisted of the United Political Organization, the National Front (UPONF) formed in 1975 and lead by Aden's chief ideologue, Abdel

Fattah Ismail. The UPONF leader was Moscow's strongest supporter in Aden. Nevertheless, as merely head of party (as opposed to head of state), Ismail could neither speak nor act for the government. Additionally, in the absence of a vanguard party to institutionalize the revolution, there was no assurance that South Yemen would remain on the "progressive" (pro-Soviet) path. Bad memories of failures in Egypt, Sudan and most recently, Somalia, all led from the progressive path by nationalist leaders who declined to institutionalize their revolutions, must have weighed heavily on the Soviet psyche as Salim Robaye Ali pursued a more moderate and non-aligned policy.

South Yemen's support for Ethiopia against Arab brethren in Eritrea hampered President Ali's efforts to improve relations with wealthy Arab states. Pressure from Arab governments intensified, in April 1978, after reports that Eritreans had shot down a South Yemeni pilot who was flying missions for Ethiopia.⁶⁷ The effects of this pressure surfaced in the press on 6 June when the Beirut newspaper An-Nahar reported that South Yemen had decided to withdraw its troops from Ethiopia.⁶⁸ Soviet anxiety over continued use of South Yemen's facilities, so critical to the war effort in the Horn, intensified in the wake of these reports.

The combination of these factors - the non-aligned foreign policy of President Ali; his ideological slant to China; the head of state versus head of party dilemma, compounded by the

lack of institutionalization in the revolution; and the pressures on the Aden regime to withdraw from Ethiopia - generated considerable uneasiness in the Kremlin. However, this apprehensive complexion changed appreciably subsequent to President Ali's execution in late June 1978. Did this destabilizing event provide Moscow the target of opportunity with which to guarantee access to Aden's relatively vital facilities? What vehicle did the Soviet's use to exploit the alleged target of opportunity? One hypothesis might suggest that the patterns of instability, in South Yemen, generated this target of opportunity and further influenced Aden's demand for Soviet military assistance. The Soviet response to these military assistance demand factors, in turn, affected Moscow's ability to exploit the target of opportunity.

1. Patterns of Instability at Work

The previous chapter highlights various patterns of instability endemic to the Red Sea Basin. Several of these patterns were at work during the Spring of 1978. Chief among the forces contributing to the downfall of Salim Robaye Ali was the interpersonal conflict between the President and the Secretary General of the UPONF, Abdel Fattah Ismail. The rivalry between these individuals dates from their early association in the National Liberation Front. Its roots are lodged in the different origin, background and outlook of the two men.⁶⁹ Abdel Fattah Ismail was the son of a North Yemeni laborer. His cultural ties are with the urban elements

in the North. Ismail derived his ideological training from the Marxist radical elements of the Palistinian liberation movement. Salim Robaye Ali was born in Al-Mahal, about 25 miles from Aden. He came from a farming family and was heavily influenced by the pro-Nasser Arab Nationalist Movement which he joined in 1960. Ali drew much support from the Hadramaut region where he formed one of its earliest political cells. Despite these asymmetries, both men worked together in the liberation movement and the subsequent ouster of South Yemen's first two leaders, Qahtan Sha'abi and Mohammad Hatyham. This tactical alliance dissolved after Haryham's downfall in July 1971. The resultant jockeying for position polarized various sections of the Aden regime. Ismail sought NLF dominance and centralized control of all societal elements. He worked ruthlessly to rid all tribal and bourgeoisie remnants from the army and security forces, leaning heavily on Soviet and East European support to achieve his goal. Ali countered by taking the revolution to the countryside and forming the people's militia. With his election as Deputy Secretary General of the NLF in 1972, President Ali appeared to have achieved a dominant position over Ismail. The latter offset this gain by leaning more towards Moscow and stressing the inadequacies of Peking's assistance. This complemented the Soviet desire to enhance its influence in Aden. Peking's and Moscow's inability spurred Ali to initiate a more pragmatic foreign policy designed to win financial support from wealthy Arab states and the West.

This interpersonal rivalry at the top echelon of the government permeated the remaining patterns of instability at work during the Spring of 1978. The combination of primordial, ethnic, cultural and urban versus rural asymmetries deeply rooted in the backgrounds of Ismail and Ali were projected into the already unstable Yemeni environment reinforcing similar cleavages within the societal structure.

Irredentist conflicts compounded the destabilizing atmosphere in South Yemen. Border clashes along the frontiers with North Yemen and Saudi Arabia as well as deliberations over continued support for the Dhofari rebels both reflected and reinforced the interpersonal rivalry in Aden. Ismail feared the resurgence of Zaidi dominance in Sanaa typified by President Ghashmi's moves to pacify the northern tribes and remove, from the YAR government, those who opposed his pro-Saudi policies.⁷⁰ Accordingly, Ismail favored destabilizing operations across disputed sections of the borders with YAR and Saudi Arabia as a means of exerting pressure on Riyadh and Sanaa. Such operations served the additional purpose of thwarting President Ali's attempts to lessen PDRY's isolation in the Arab world. Ali's efforts to decouple Aden from the irredentist conflict in Dhofar characterized this pro-Arab initiative. However, his efforts met staunch resistance from Ismail's supporters. Amid reports in early June 1978, that South Yemen had asked Kuwati to help mediate its difficulties with Oman, Ismail's colleague, Ali Nasser Mohammad Hasani, countered by emphasizing:

the people of Democratic Yemen resolutely and consistently support the struggle of the Omani patriots headed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman against the venal regime of Sultan Qabus.⁷¹

South Yemen's deplorable economic condition exacerbated existing patterns of instability throughout the country. The NLF's radical economic reforms ran counter to existing social patterns in the countryside. Stringent economic measures in the city coupled with ruthless suppression of urban opposition caused many city dwellers to seek refuge outside the country. Ship visits to Aden had increased only marginally since the reopening of the Suez Canal, depriving the economy of much needed export revenue.⁷² This fact coupled with sharp increases in import costs guaranteed South Yemen's endemic financial crisis. Nevertheless, Ali's overtures to wealthy Arab states were beginning to produce positive results. Government reserves had risen from \$54 million in 1975 to \$82 million in 1976. This trend continued in 1977 and into 1978. In 1977 South Yemen was admitted to the Islamic Development Bank and received substantial development aid from Kuwait (\$13.5m) and Saudi Arabia (\$20m).⁷³ South Yemen's economic aspirations hinged on a continuing detente with its Arab neighbors. The financial assistance resources of these countries far outweighed those of the USSR. Yet, South Yemen's support for Ethiopia over Eritrea and Somalia severely strained this fragile detente. As the fighting in the Horn intensified during early 1978, Aden came under strong pressure to choose between its political alignment,

in favor of Moscow, and its economic stability which depended on financial assistance from Arab nations. For both Ali and Ismail the choice was simple. Unfortunately, stability in South Yemen did not benefit from these choices which, as expected, were diametrically opposed.

Ideological conflict added still another pattern of instability to South Yemen's volatile environment in 1978. The Maoist line adopted by President Ali clashed sharply with the pro-Soviet bent professed by Ismail. The sincerity each man attached to his beliefs is speculative. To be sure, Ismail and Ali used their ideological benefactors to gain tactical advantage on each other. Nevertheless, as the conflict between these individuals intensified and external pressures mounted, the perception of their ideological differences sharpened. This perception was most acute in Moscow and Peking where Aden's factional struggle formed part of the overall Sino-Soviet rivalry for ideological supremacy in the Third World movement. In April 1978, China's theoretical journal Red Flag scored the USSR's intervention in the Horn of Africa from where "it could move into southern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula." This same article warned Third World states that Moscow:

supports one side and then the other...Facts...show that the side that receives Soviet assistance as well as the side that opposes it are both victims of social imperialist aggression and objects of the Soviet Union's colonial enslavement...⁷⁴

Moscow used the occasion of China's rapprochement with Oman to criticize Peking and launch an indirect attack on Ali's

pan-Arab diplomatic offensive. China's withdrawal of support for Oman's rebel forces was noted as evidence "the Maoist leadership is increasing its efforts to establish cooperation with Arab reaction."⁷⁵ As formal diplomatic ties between Oman and PRC were established, TASS lamented: "Continuing to stake on the USA and such reactionary regimes as Saudi Arabia, Sultan Qabus has found a new ally, the Peking leadership."⁷⁶ By their ideological rhetoric the USSR and PRC clearly were choosing sides in Aden's brewing factional crisis. In doing so they accentuated the polarization of competing factions and inflamed an inherently volatile mixture.

In the Spring of 1978, additional external and internal forces intensified the patterns of instability at work in South Yemen. Moscow pressed for a formal agreement to guarantee and extend its access to Aden's naval and air facilities which were so vital to the war effort in the Horn. Kremlin leaders also lobbied for the formation of a vanguard party to institutionalize South Yemen's revolution and secure Soviet presence in the country. Moderate Arab States, with Western backing, and China urged South Yemen to abandon its support for Ethiopia and loosen its ties with the USSR and Cuba. These external pressures aggravated the PDRY's internal patterns of instability. The most salient of these patterns was the inter-personal rivalry between President Ali and UPONF leader Ismail. This rivalry, now moving towards its long expected showdown, divided Aden's ruling elite into two competing factions whose interactions accentuated the remaining patterns of instability.

Kremlin decisionmakers monitored, with great concern, the explosive atmosphere generated by these patterns of instability. Should President Ali's policies prevail, Moscow's efforts in the Horn would be severely constrained and their overall position in the Red Sea basin threatened. On the other hand, if properly exploited this volatile environment could provide the target of opportunity with which to significantly enhance Soviet strategic incentives in the region. The vehicle chosen to capitalize on this destabilizing milieu thus became crucial. In searching for this crucial vehicle Soviet decisionmakers repeatedly focused on their military assistance program assiduously cultivated in South Yemen since 1968.

2. Soviet Military Assistance to South Yemen

To understand why the Soviet Union would select military assistance as the vehicle to exploit the destabilizing atmosphere in South Yemen, one must first deal with two ancillary questions. What was the substance, in gross figures, of the USSR's military assistance program to PDRY? What factors sustained this program and allowed it to grow to the proportions it did by 1978?

At the time of South Yemen's independence, Great Britain was reported to have granted its former colony \$28.8 million to develop a viable national defense. Included in the grant were four BAC 167s and four ex-RAF jet provost T-52s. The depth of anti-British sentiment among Aden's leftist elite led to an early severing of this metropole linkage.

In February 1968, one month after President Sha'abi's visit to Moscow, South Yemen dismissed the twenty-eight British officers attached to the army.⁷⁷ Great Britain summarily terminated all military assistance, and the USSR moved quickly to become the dominant arms supplier to the strategic new state. In March 1968 the first Soviet military delegation visited South Yemen. By July, shipments of T-34 tanks were arriving in Aden. The following month Aden and Moscow concluded the first of several military assistance agreements.⁷⁸ In 1969 the USSR awarded approximately 70 scholarships in military affairs to South Yemeni students. Roughly 100 Soviet "experts" were reported in South Yemen during the same year. Also in 1969, the USSR transferred the first contingent of MIG aircraft (12 MIG-17s) to Aden.⁷⁹ Soviet military shipments increased in 1970 as the young state moved further to the left, adopting a constitution written by East Germany and changing its name to the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen (PDRY). Much heavier arms shipments began in 1971, subsequent to an even further radicalization of the government as a coalition headed by Salim Robaye Ali and Abdel Fattah Ismail seized power.⁸⁰

Table 4.1 on page 153 presents a cumulative value estimation of arms delivered to South Yemen up to 1977. The data in Table 4.1 reflects Moscow's role as the PDRY's dominant arms supplier. Approximately 93% of all arms transfers to South Yemen originated in the USSR. The nearly fourfold increase in arms shipments subsequent to 1973 depicts the

heightened significance accorded to South Yemen after the Soviet expulsion from Egypt in 1972. Although worldwide inflation accounts for some of this increase, the fact that the percentage of these arms transfers attributable to the USSR rose from 89 to 94% illustrates Moscow's manifest desire to achieve sole supplier status vis-a-vis the PDRY.

One facet of the Soviet military assistance program to South Yemen, which deserves particular attention, concerns the portion devoted to personnel training. Between 1968 and 1977, roughly 850 military personnel from South Yemen were trained in the USSR. During the same period, an additional 25 persons studied in Eastern Europe. These figures represent the total of South Yemeni military personnel trained in communist countries.⁸¹ Concurrently, the number of communist technicians training personnel in South Yemen rose steadily since 1968. By the end of 1977, the total number of Soviet and East European military technicians in South Yemen was estimated at 350. Cuba was believed to have provided an additional 350 military technicians.⁸² These personnel training/exchange programs are most significant. The personal relationships cultivated via these programs harbor the potential to substantially influence domestic political events in favor of the patron state. One could argue that these relationships did not prevent the expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt or Somalia or of American advisers from Ethiopia. While this may be true, it must be remembered that pro-Soviet and pro-American factions formed the basis of viable opposition

groups in each of these countries.⁸³ Moreover, in an effort to prevent expulsions, the USSR has placed great emphasis on training internal security forces as a means to develop a pro-Soviet palace guard around a coveted client. The personal relationships developed by this training serve to erect a pro-Soviet barrier which separates the client leader from both his potential opposition and his potentially anti-Soviet supporters. These relationships also provide a valuable source of domestic intelligence.⁸⁴

As 1977 drew to a close, the Soviet military assistance program to the PDRY had reached significant proportions. During this first decade of South Yemen's independence the USSR emerged as the young state's dominant arms supplier. The limited arms shipments and personnel exchanges of the late 1960s were substantially increased over the early and mid 1970s. These shipments, graphic illustrations of the USSR's capability to out-produce its Chinese competitors, enabled Moscow to achieve a virtual monopoly over South Yemen's arms transfers. Russian weapons comprised the PDRY's order of battle and Soviet, East European and Cuban advisors permeated the defense and internal security forces.

Various arms transfer analysts have provided many reasons to explain why nations supply or demand arms. The intent here is not to review that literature, but to establish those factors peculiar to the USSR/PDRY arms transfer relationship which enabled it to prosper over the years. An

interesting mixture of Soviet supply incentives and PDRY demand factors produced this expanding military relationship.

3. Soviet Supply Incentives

Soviet supply incentives can be broken down into two sets of mutually reinforcing components: foreign policy objectives and structural elements.⁸⁵ Foreign policy objectives, conducive to arms transfers, are derived from the Kremlin's subjective perception of Soviet national interests in a given region (i.e., the Red Sea basin). Structural elements deal with the combination of bureaucratic interests and organizational framework as they relate to Soviet arms transfers. A separate list of Soviet foreign policy objectives and structural elements, related to the Red Sea Basin is presented in Table 4.2 on page 154. The interactive nature of these supply incentives is evident by comparing the two lists. For example, the foreign policy objective of maintaining internal security of clients/allies is facilitated by the USSR's structural experience in internal security operations. In much the same manner, the desire to establish a presence and influence events in a region is enhanced by the growth of the Soviet Navy into a "blue water" fleet. Conversely, the bureaucratic constituency represented by the Soviet Navy, presumably, would press for arms transfers as a preliminary condition for acquiring base facilities and establishing a presence in a client state. Structural factors do not always complement foreign policy objectives. The ugly

Russian syndrome is a case in point. The tendency of the Russian adviser to look down upon his Arab trainee often serves to enhance vice undermine PRC or Western influence.

4. South Yemen Demand Factors

Nine factors influence South Yemen's demand for arms.⁸⁶ Six of these factors pertain, in varying degree, throughout the Third World.

a. Authoritarian Governments

Since independence South Yemen has been governed by a series of authoritarian regimes. Attempts by these regimes to establish centralized control and import a foreign atheistic ideology have met stiff opposition from those in and out of government. In the PDRY, opposition equates to treason and is repressed by force. The desire to quell opposition and ensure regime survival generates a demand for arms and military assistance.

b. Low Level of Economic Development

The PDRY's endemic economic crisis is well documented. Externally provided arms allow the nation to satisfy its internal and external security needs without diverting scarce financial resources into indigenous weapons development and procurement programs.

c. Under-militarized

This demand factor follows, somewhat, from the previous indicator. The lack of an indigenous armaments industry renders South Yemen a militarily impoverished state. Accordingly, large quantities of unsophisticated weapons may

be absorbed. Concurrently, the introduction of more advanced weapons in neighboring states inspires a demand for similar weapons in the PDRY. The influx of these weapons generates an additional demand for advisers and technicians from the supplier state. South Yemen's level of military literacy is so low that when compared to the perceived threat, and the weapons required to counter it, surrogate forces are often viewed as the most effective military assistance.

d. History of Colonialism

South Yemen's colonial experience engendered much anti-British and anti-West sentiment within the government. The net effect of these feelings is to turn to the socialist world (USSR and PRC), as a source for much needed arms. China's inability to provide the quantities and types of arms required enables the USSR to emerge as the PDRY's dominant military assistance partner.

e. Intractable Conflicts

South Yemen's border conflicts with Saudi Arabia and the YAR and the rebel movement in the Dhofar region all appear to be intractable. Additionally, the PDRY lent its forces to take part in Eritrea and Lebanon. South Yemen's participation in these intractable conflicts generates significant demands for Soviet arms.

f. Fear of Imperialism

As a former colony, South Yemen possesses a justifiable fear of imperialist intervention. This fear coincides with Soviet rallying cries to combat the imperialist

aggressor. Accordingly, sizeable quantities of Soviet arms are demanded as a means to counter the putative imperialist threat.

The following three demand factors more closely identify with South Yemen than the Third World as a whole:

g. Strategic Location

The PDRY's most significant natural resource is its strategic location. This geostrategic significance enhances South Yemen's attractiveness among external actors competing for strategic advantage in the global arena. This attractiveness facilitates Aden's ability to acquire arms which are deemed necessary to fend off the agents of aggression.

h. South Yemen is Arab

As an Arab state, South Yemen is beset with numerous endemic conflict scenarios which impact on its demands for arms. These conflicts can be internal, such as those emanating from primordial and religious cleavages, or external such as those related to the common struggle against Israel. Additionally, the PDRY's Arab heritage colors its image in the outside world. This image benefits Aden's arms relationship with Moscow where a constant foreign policy theme stresses support for the Arab cause.

i. Lack of Arab Unity

The inability of the Arab nations to arrive at common solutions to the myriad conflicts which proliferate the Arab world encourages individual states to opt for

unilateral action. South Yemen's alliance with Ethiopia over Eritrea and its support for radical wings of the Palestine Liberation Movement serve as prime examples of such unilateral initiatives. These initiatives influence Aden's demand for arms while furthering its relationship with the USSR.

5. South Yemen's Military Assistance Equation

Military assistance to PDRY can be thought of as a function of the interaction of Soviet supply incentives and South Yemeni demand factors. However, at least one additional element must be added to complete the equation. The patterns of instability outlined above act as multipliers to intensify the individual demand factors. The matrix presented in Table 4.3 on page 155 attempts to illustrate this phenomena. An X appearing in Table 4.3 connotes intensification of an individual demand factor resulting from its inevitable interaction with one or more patterns of recurring instability. For example, interpersonal rivalry, such as that between Ali and Ismail, hindered efforts to resolve intractable conflicts in Dhofar and along the borders with the YAR and Saudi Arabia. The intensification of this demand factor increased South Yemen's demand for arms in order to deal with these conflicts. Conversely, the lack of an X indicates that the pattern of instability has little or no effect on the respective demand factor. Here, the obvious example is the PDRY's strategic location which is unaltered by the various patterns of instability. Clearly, much work needs to be done to separate and

quantify the intensification value of each interaction. Nevertheless, this primarily subjective matrix serves to illuminate, in a primitive way, the multiplication potential of the patterns of instability when related to individual demand factors.

The interaction of the supply incentives and intensified demand factors produces the following arms transfer equation for South Yemen:

$$MA = f(S_{fp}, S_s) \pm xf(D)$$

where:

- MA = Military Assistance to South Yemen,
- S_{fp} = Supply incentives resulting from Soviet foreign policy objectives,
- S_s = Supply incentives resulting from Soviet structural elements,
- x = Multiplicative potential provided by recurring patterns of instability,
- D = South Yemeni demand factors.

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 on pages 156 and 157 provide one way to assess the interaction of the various supply incentives and demand factors. The appearance of a plus sign indicates the probability that an arms transfer will occur. Similarly, a minus sign means that an arms transfer is unlikely.

From Tables 4.4 and 4.5 it can be seen that many Soviet foreign policy objectives and structural elements are reinforced by South Yemen's demand factors. For example, the

Soviet foreign policy objective to provide for the internal security of clients/allies is enhanced by the PDRY's authoritarian regime and low level of military development. These same demand factors converge with the USSR's structural need to establish overseas supply lines. Conversely, South Yemen's low level of economic development hinders their ability to pay for arms transfers; thus, doing little to improve the Soviet Union's balance of payments. In a similar vein, the ugly Russian syndrome is not conducive to arms transfers in Arab South Yemen where vivid memories of colonialism and imperialism still exist.

As with the previous table, these matrices require considerable refinement. However, the preponderance of positive interaction between supply incentives and demand factors suggests a very high probability of Soviet arms transfers to South Yemen. This probability is heightened further by the multiplicative influence of the patterns of instability on PDRY demand factors. It is this positive combination of USSR supply incentives and PDRY demand factors, enhanced by recurring patterns of instability, that enabled the Soviet military assistance program in South Yemen to achieve the significant proportions it did by the end of 1977.

Through this military assistance program which included the in-country stationing of Soviet, Cuban and East German advisers and a generous military scholarship agendum, Moscow developed very close relationships with the PDRY military

establishment. Accordingly, as the destabilizing atmosphere in Aden approached superheated conditions, the USSR looked to these military relationships as a means to exploit any targets of opportunity that might arise. The ouster of President Ali, in June 1978, was just such a target of opportunity, and military relationships, cultivated via the military assistance program, played a prominent role in its successful exploitation. Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Sergei Gorshkov; PDRY Defense Minister, Ali Nasir Antar; and several Cuban and Soviet advisers emerged as leading actors in the drama that climaxed with President Ali's execution on June 26.

6. Precipitating the Target of Opportunity

The Kremlin's offensive to secure Robaye Ali's downfall, preferably by legal means, began in early 1978. In an article entitled "Southern Yemen: The Road to Progress", the Soviet journal International Affairs praised UPONF leader Ismail and barely mentioned President Ali.⁸⁷ The following month South Yemen's Prime Minister Ali Nasir Mohammad Hasani arrived in Moscow. According to Moscow Radio (in Arabic) Hasani was received by Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev.⁸⁸ Such an honor is usually reserved for visiting heads of state, and constituted a snubbing, broadcast to the Arab world, of PDRY President Ali. The South Yemeni delegation included the ministers of foreign affairs and defense and the chief of the general staff of the armed forces.⁸⁹ While the PDRY Prime Minister was meeting with his counterpart, Aleksey Kosygin, and

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Gromyko, Brezhnev and Soviet Defense Minister Dimitry Ustinov held talks with visiting Cuban Vice-President, Raul Castro.⁹⁰ After successive meetings with Brezhnev, Gromyko, Kosygin, Ustinov and various other Soviet military elite, Prime Minister Hasani on February 4 departed Moscow. The high level nature of Hasani's contacts coupled with the frequent interchange with Soviet defense officials suggests the military assistance, perhaps as a quid pro quo for guaranteed access to Aden, was a major topic of discussion. The joint communique, issued after the Prime Minister's departure, "expressed satisfaction" with Soviet-PDRY cooperation in strengthening the PDRY's "independence, sovereignty and defense potential." Additionally, the communique noted the importance of "strengthening the relations between the CPSU and the UPONF", and declared that Hasani's visit assisted "in entrenching the contacts" between the two parties.⁹¹ In the profuse media verbiage surrounding the visit, President Ali's name was conspicuously absent, and Hasani was referred to as "head of the PDRY Government."⁹²

Act two of the Byzantine tragedy unfolded in May when Admiral Gorshkov visited South Yemen. Prior to his departure for Aden, Admiral Gorshkov observed Pacific Fleet naval exercises with Party Chairman Brezhnev from the bridge of the cruiser Admiral Senavin. Conceivably, Brezhnev and Gorshkov could have used this opportunity to discuss the fine points

of the latter's upcoming trip. The naval demonstration was part of large scale military exercises which included field maneuvers within 25 miles of the Chinese border.⁹³ Brezhnev's attendance heightened the significance of these exercises which served to remind the international community, including the pro-Peking element in Aden, of the USSR's military superiority over China.⁹⁴

Admiral Gorshkov's military delegation arrived in Aden, "at the invitation of the PDRY Defense Minister", on 18 May.⁹⁵ During his visit Admiral Gorshkov visited Mukalla, a potential base site, and held joint discussions with the Soviet educated Defense Minister, Ali Antar, and the nation's chief ideologue, Abdel Fattah Ismail. During this meeting Gorshkov, who is a member of the CPSU Central Committee, and UPONF leader Ismail exchanged greetings at the party level and discussed "friendly bilateral relations and ways of expanding them."⁹⁶ Admiral Gorshkov did not meet with President Ali or any of his supporters during the Aden visit. Again, as in the earlier visit to Moscow, military assistance appears to have been a major topic of discussion. Significantly, the PDRY Defense Minister accompanied Admiral Gorshkov on his return trip to the USSR. Reports of Antar's departure noted "During the visit, which will last several days, the Yemeni minister will discuss relations between the two countries in the military field."⁹⁷ The South Yemeni Defense Minister made a side trip to Berlin where he met with GDR Premier Honecker on 1 June.⁹⁸ Six days later Antar held discussions

in Moscow with his counterpart Dimitriy Ustinov, Admiral Gorshkov and General of the Army Sergei Sokolov.⁹⁹ The reasons for the reciprocal visits by Gorshkov and Antar emerged a few weeks later when reports of a secret USSR-PDRY military cooperation agreement surfaced in the press. In addition to providing 30 MIGs, 5 missile patrol boats and constructing naval and air force facilities, this agreement stipulated that the USSR would come to the aid of the PDRY in the event of foreign aggression.¹⁰⁰ The conclusion of this agreement is significant when one considers that South Yemen's President, Salim Robaye Ali, apparently was excluded from the entire negotiating process. This exclusion proved to be a fateful augury of things to come.

While Defense Minister Antar was in Moscow, South Yemen's Foreign Minister, Mohammad Saleh Muti, was meeting with Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, in Havana. From here Muti traveled to Algeria, Syria and Iraq in an attempt to gain support for the PDRY's involvement in the Horn of Africa. From 10-14 June Prime Minister Hasani received a special Soviet envoy, ostensibly to discuss, "some issues concerning the limiting of the arms race." The Soviet envoy, known only as Mendelevich, was characterized as an "ambassador on special assignments."¹⁰¹ Meanwhile the number of Soviet, Cuban and East German advisers arriving in Aden continued to mount. Approximately 1200 Soviet advisers were believed to be in Aden in April 1978, and by late June their number was estimated at 2500. By mid-June, 500 East Germans were reported

to be advising South Yemen's police and internal security departments. According to a Kuwaiti newspaper, roughly 500 Cuban troops had been transferred from Ethiopia, on 28 June, to strengthen the PDRY's Popular Militia. This report placed the total number of Soviet, Cuban and East German advisers, in the PDRY, at 6000 by the end of June.¹⁰²

The round of visits by Ismail's supporters to Havana, Berlin and Moscow coupled with the influx of Soviet, Cuban and East German advisers and the special visit to Aden by Ambassador Mendelevich suggests that Moscow had more than an intuitive notion of impending instability in South Yemen. Presumably, Kremlin leaders were indicating to Ismail that if President Ali could be removed, by internal forces, the USSR was prepared to come to the aid of the new government headed by the UPONF leader. From an ideological standpoint, any reprisal by President Ali would constitute foreign aggression against the Yemeni socialist revolution; hence, Soviet fraternal assistance would be in keeping with the provisions of military agreement concluded in May.

The drive to unseat Salim Robaye Ali began, in earnest, in late May, when Ismail ordered the arrest of roughly 150 officers loyal to the President.¹⁰³ However, the arrest of these officers, who had allegedly opposed the establishment of a vanguard party, was not sufficient to strip President Ali of his support within the PDRY's central committee. Consequently, Party leader Ismail set in motion a series of steps designed to bring the drama to its gruesome climax.

On 24 June a South Yemeni envoy, enroute to a special meeting with YAR President Ghashmi, was intercepted by Ismail's agents and replaced by the cousin of the PDRY's interior minister, Saleh Mosleh. The first envoy, Salem Lawar, carried a briefcase containing the names of twenty dissidents who had fled to South Yemen after an abortive revolt against President Ghashmi in May. According to some reports, the briefcase also contained plans for joint operations to overthrow the UPONF. The briefcase of the second envoy contained a bomb. Unfortunately, the second envoy did not realize his presence would be required when the charged stachel was opened. Consequently, the opening of the briefcase opened the "door to eternity for himself and Ghashmi."¹⁰⁴

President Ali, who had made a futile attempt to telephone a warning to Ghashmi, was blamed immediately for the assassination. At an extraordinary session on 25 June, the PDRY Central Committee voted 121 to 4 to suspend the President's powers and form a commission to investigate his actions. Sensing the inevitable outcome of the commission, the fallen President withdrew to the Presidential Palace and surrounded himself with about 700 loyal Army troops.¹⁰⁵ Ali and his supporters were no match for the combined assault of naval, air and Popular Militia forces launched by Ismail. According to several reports, Soviet and Cuban forces assisted Ismail, and Cuban pilots flew bombing missions against the Presidential Palace.¹⁰⁶ After holding out for about 12 hours, on June 26, the deposed President surrendered. He was hastily

tried and executed along with the ill-fated envoy, Salem Lawar, and UPONF Politburo member, Jassem Salem.

7. The Exploitive Vehicle

The rapid nature in which Moscow provided support to Abdel Fattah Ismail signified their readiness to exploit the target of opportunity presented by the ouster of President Ali. The support continued throughout the summer and fall of 1978, as the new pro-Soviet leader battled stiff resistance throughout the countryside. The vehicle utilized by the Kremlin to successfully exploit the target of opportunity was their well-established military assistance program in South Yemen. Russian arms and equipment, transferred to Aden since 1968; the military cooperation agreement, concluded in May; the influx of Soviet, Cuban and East German advisers and the personal relationships developed between senior Soviet and PDRY military leaders all played decisive roles in the drama which led to President Ali's downfall. One might question whether other vehicles, such as economic aid or political support, could have been used just as effectively. Ironically, while economic aid is what South Yemen needs most, it is what Moscow is least capable of providing. Of the \$90 million economic commitment made to PDRY in 1977-1978 only \$5 million was actually delivered.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, it was the 'inadequacy of Soviet economic aid that drove President Ali to seek friendlier ties with wealthy Arab states. Political support, based on the Soviet model would be equally insufficient to exploit the target of opportunity generated in South

Yemen. The litany of human suffering characterized by the multitude of refugees fleeing Viet Nam, Cambodia, Ethiopia and South Yemen itself is sufficient testimony of the incompetency of the Soviet brand of socialism.

Of all the tools at Moscow's disposal, military assistance, via arms transfers, advisors and personnel exchanges, looms as the most efficient vehicle to exploit recurring targets of opportunity. In many instances Soviet supply incentives for providing military assistance are reinforced by the recipient nation's demand factors. With respect to South Yemen, these demand factors were enhanced by the patterns of instability endemic to the Red Sea basin. Accordingly, when the target of opportunity arose, in the spring of 1978, the Soviet military assistance program to South Yemen, attentively cultivated over 10 years, emerged as the most proficient exploitive vehicle.

D. CONCLUSION

The Soviet Union's national security interests as related to the Red Sea basin inspire strategic incentives which are both offensive and defensive in nature. The patterns of instability endemic to the region generate targets of opportunity, which Moscow selectively exploits in pursuit of these strategic incentives. The conflict in the Horn of Africa during 1977 and the ouster of PDRY President Ali in 1978 comprise two such targets of opportunity. The Soviet exploitation of these targets can be

examined from three levels. When viewed from the theoretical plane of the rational actor, it can be seen that Soviet strategic incentives favored support for Ethiopia over Somalia. Descending to the more earthen realm of bureaucratic politics reveals that the pulling and hauling within the Kremlin ultimately resulted in a similar decision to support the Mengistu regime. By descending even further to the level of implementation, the case of South Yemen demonstrates the role of Soviet military assistance as the most efficient vehicle with which to exploit the emerging targets of opportunity. To be sure, military assistance also was utilized as the exploitive vehicle in the decision to support Ethiopia over Somalia. Soviet supply incentives to provide military assistance are reinforced by recipient demand factors in each state. These factors, in turn, are enhanced by the patterns of instability endemic to the Red Sea basin.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

¹The use of the term "murder" is perhaps too general. To be more specific, President al-Ghashmi of the YAR was assassinated by a bomb-toting envoy, and President Ali of PDRY was executed by his successors for "crimes against the state."

²Mohammad Hasan Heikal, The Sphinx and the Commissar (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 33.

³Edward T. Wilson, Russia and Black Africa Before World War II (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1974), p. 9. Wilson points out that Ibrahim was the greatgrandfather of the Russian novelist, Pushkin. As such, Ibrahim "...served as the subject of the first Russian historical novel as well as the focal point for the first popular Russian interest in Black Africa." In my discussions with an Eritrean liberation front leader, he indicated that when Ethiopian leader Mengistu Haile Mariam visited Moscow the Soviets made a point of taking him to visit the Pushkin Memorial. This quite astounded my source who hastened to point out that the famous Ibrahim was, in actuality, an Eritrean.

⁴Ibid, p. 12.

⁵Izvestiya, 16 April 1977. Appearing in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), 20 April 1977, pp. F 12-14.

⁶This "offensive" and defensive" concept is also utilized by Robert Legvold in his assessment of the Soviet Union's external stake in Africa. See Robert Legvold, "The Soviet Union's Strategic Stake in Africa," in Africa and the United States: Vital Interests, ed. Jennifer Seymour Whitaker (New York: New York University Press, 1978), p. 167. Legvold's analysis, much more eloquent than my own, separates this external stake into four dimensions: defensive national concerns, defensive strategic concerns, offensive national concerns and offensive strategic concerns. Although I agree with the substance of Legvold's analysis, I prefer the term incentive (something that incites to action) over Legvold's more reticent "concern." Additionally, inasmuch as a nation theoretically designs its strategy on the basis of its national concerns, I find it conceptually difficult to maintain a separation between strategic concerns and national concerns.

⁷U.S. Department of Commerce, A Statistical Analysis of the World's Merchant Fleets (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1979), p. v. See also Legvold, p. 167; John H. Spencer, Ethiopia, The Horn of Africa, and U.S. Policy (Cambridge, MA: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis Inc., 1977), p. 52 (n. 122); and Alvin J. Cottrell and R. M. Burrell, "The Soviet Navy and the Indian Ocean," Strategic Review 2 (Fall 1974), p. 30.

⁸Cottrell and Burrell, p. 31.

⁹Europa Publications Limited, Middle East and North Africa, 1978-1979, (London: Europa Publications Ltd, 1978), p. 118.

¹⁰U. S. Central Intelligence Agency, Indian Ocean Atlas (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976). On page 6 of this atlas the CIA states that the Soviet Union has been the most active of all non-littoral states in conducting oceanographic surveys in the Indian Ocean since completion of the International Indian Ocean Expedition in 1965.

¹¹Cottrell and Burrell, p. 33.

¹²As reported in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce and National Ocean Policy, Soviet Oceans Development, Study pursuant to S. Res. 222, Committee Print. 94th Cong. 2nd sess., October 1976, p. 146.

¹³Evgenii A. Tarabrin, The New Scramble for Africa (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), p. 151. For a Western appraisal see Guy F. Erb, "Africa and the International Economy: A U.S. Response," in Africa and the United States: Vital Interests, ed. Jennifer Seymour Whitaker (New York: New York University Press, 1978), p. 64. See also "The Mineral Connection," The Economist, 9 July 1977, p. 82.

¹⁴Indian Ocean Atlas, p. 20.

¹⁵Tass, "The Horn of Africa in the Strategy of Imperialism," 8 February 1978. Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 9 February 1978.

¹⁶Pravda (Moscow), 13 July 1974. Appearing in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (CDSP), 7 August 1974, p. 14.

¹⁷ Ibid., 16 November 1977. Appearing in CDSF, 14 December 1977, p. 5.

¹⁸ For a thorough discussion of the Rational Actor Paradigm and its variants, see Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 32-38.

¹⁹ Izvestiya (Moscow) 16 April 1977. The tactical significance of Perim was demonstrated in 1971 when a Palestinian Commando Unit initiated an attack from Perim on the Israeli tanker Coral Sea. See Tom J. Farer, War Clouds on the Horn of Africa: A Crisis for Detente (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1976), p. 126. For its part, Cairo needed no reminder of the strategic significance of Perim or of the threat posed by Soviet control of the Bab el Mandeb, see n. 2 supra.

²⁰ Spencer, p. 54.

²¹ Moscow Radio, 16 June 1976. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 16 June 1976.

²² Pravda (Moscow), 8 July 1976. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 12 July 1976.

²³ The Guardian, 17 July 1977, p. 13.

²⁴ New York Times, 5 February 1977.

²⁵ New York Times, 23 January 1977, IV p. 3.

²⁶ "Shadows over the Red Sea," Izvestiya, 16 April 1977, Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 20 April 1977.

²⁷ Moscow Domestic Service, 1 June 1977, appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 2 June 1977; and Moscow Radio, 2 June 1977, appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 3 June 1977.

²⁸ As reported in The Guardian, 10 July 1977, p. 10.

²⁹ Washington Post, 26 April 1977.

³⁰ Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1977, p. 457.

³¹ Moscow Radio (in Somali to Somalia), 2 June 1977.
Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 3 June 1977.

³² Report of London Telegraph story contained in Arab Report and Record, 16-31 July 1977, p. 687. Somalia later denied they had asked the Soviets to leave. Possibly, Siad Barre had issued this order based on the U. S. arms offer, and then rescinded it when Washington hesitated. See Arnaud De Borchgrave, "Crossed Wires," Newsweek 26 September 1977, pp. 42-43.

³³ Arab Report and Record, 16-31 July 1977, New York Times 6 Aug. and 18 September 1977; and De Borchgrave, p. 43.

³⁴ Colin Legum, "Crisis in Africa," Foreign Affairs 57 (America and the World, 1978): 634; Donald Zagoria, "Into the Breach: New Soviet Alliances in the Third World." Foreign Affairs 57 (Spring 1979): 734; and Strategic Survey 1978, p. 14.

³⁵ The Guardian, 3 June 1979, p. 7.

³⁶ Arab Report and Record, 16-31 May 1978, p. 383: See also Colin Legum and Bill Lee, "Crisis in the Horn of Africa: International Dimensions of the Somali-Ethiopian Conflict," in Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1977-1978, ed. Colin Legum (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1979), p. A-39.

³⁷ For detailed studies of bureaucratic politics in the Soviet Union, see Michel Tatu, Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev to Kosygin (Paris: Bernard Casset, 1967; reprint ed., New York: Viking Press, 1970; and Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979). See also Allison, p. 237.

³⁸ Tatu, pp. 494-516. See also T. H. Rigby, "Personal and Collective Leadership: Brezhnev and Beyond," Soviet Succession: Leadership in Transition, The Washington Papers, no. 59 (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1978), pp. 41-58. Brezhnev secured Shelepin's dismissal from the Politburo in 1975 (Rigby, p. 51).

³⁹Valenta, p. 158.

⁴⁰New York Times, 4 June 1977. The administrative mechanism which cleared the way for Brezhnev is article 117 of the new constitution which, as the newspaper noted, "...creates a first deputy chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet...This in effect opens up a post of first vice president...The presidency itself could then conveniently be conferred on Mr. Brezhnev..."

⁴¹Times (London), 25 May 1977. According to the Times' report, "There were rumors...that Mr. Podgorny had been asked to step down during the party congress last February... but had refused. Brezhnev's defense of "proletarian internationalism" at the 25th party congress in the fall of 1976 may have been the initial salvo in the final battle to supplant Podgorny:

Unfortunately some have begun to interpret it in such a way that, in effect, little is left of internationalism. There are people who openly suggest renouncing internationalism. See Soviet Press n. 78*2 (February 1978): 39.

Brezhnev may have thought that the momentum built by this attack, followed by the conditional military agreement signed with Ethiopia in late 1976 and the ascendance to power of Mengistu, in early February 1977, would have been enough to oust Podgorny. Apparently, Podgorny's power base, though deteriorating, was still sufficiently strong to repel the challenge.

⁴²New York Times, 16 January and 16 March 1977.

⁴³Al-Ahram (Cairo), 19 May 1977; Arab Report and Record, 16-31 May 1977, p. 408; New York Times, 20 May 1977. In my discussions with an Eritrean guerilla leader he relayed the substance of this "secret meeting" as it was told to him by Siad Barre. Castro opened the meeting by proposing a federation of "progressive forces" in the Horn. Barre agreed with the idea on the condition that Somalia's "natural boundaries" were established (according to the guerilla leader these natural boundaries would extend to Jigjiga, but would not include the Haud. Barre's concern is driven by a desire to ensure water resources for Somali nomads. A federation which provides for the sharing of these resources, but still leaves the Ogaden under Ethiopian control is not acceptable to Barre). Mengistu countered Barre's remark by asserting "Somalia never existed", it was merely "a British and Italian creation." At this point Siad Barre picked up his hat and walked out. The entire meeting lasted less than fifteen minutes.

⁴⁴New York Times, 24 March and 4 April 1979.

⁴⁵Tass, 3 April 1977. Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 4 April 1977.

⁴⁶Pravda (Moscow), 5 April 1977. Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 7 April 1977.

⁴⁷Irving Kaplan et al., Area Handbook for Ethiopia (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1971), p. 417.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 376. The refinery at Assab has a 500,000 ton capacity and is staffed with approximately 100 Soviet technicians. A CIA research paper Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World; 1977 (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., 1978) notes on page 17, that in 1977 Moscow extended a \$100 million line of credit to Ethiopia, part of which is earmarked to increase the capacity of the Assab refinery by 75%.

⁴⁹The Ethiopian revolution adopted Marxism-Leninism well after Haile Selassie's downfall. According to a former member of the Emperor's security department, there were only about 30 Marxists in Ethiopia at the time of the revolution. Most were students who believed "revolutionaries can't be right-wing." Hence, they professed Marxism. When appraised of these students Haile Selassie refused to suppress them, "in many ways he was very broad minded." These young Marxists did not precipitate the revolution, but joined after it started. Ethiopia's official conversion to Marxism-Leninism in late 1976 appears to have resulted from tactical necessity vice ideological belief.

⁵⁰Tass, 19 March 1977. Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 21 March 1977.

⁵¹Tass, 4 May 1977. Appearing in FBIS, Soviet Union, 5 May 1977.

⁵²FBIS, Soviet Union, 5 April 1977; 8 April 1977, 10 April 1977.

⁵³At the May Plenary Session of CPSU Central Committee, Brezhnev is reported to have emphasized:

Fundamental changes in the international position of the Soviet Union, the immense growth of its influence in world politics, and the close interrelation of the internal and external factors of our development have made it necessary to include in the draft Constitution a "special chapter on the foreign policy of the USSR."

See Y. Nikolayev, "New Constitution: Continuity of the Leninist Policy of Peace," International Affairs, n. 11 (November 1977): 14, Author's quotation marks. Brezhnev's remarks, linking the new constitution with foreign policy, were delivered at the same plenary session that dismissed Podgorny. This plenary session followed on the heels of Mengistu's first visit to Moscow, and the conclusion of various Ethiopian-Soviet agreements. The timing of these events suggests that Brezhnev utilized the issue of foreign policy, specifically fraternal assistance to Ethiopia, to build the coalition against Podgorny. Assistance to Ethiopia was favored by many bureaucratic elites. Yet, by endorsing such assistance Podgorny would also be endorsing the draft Constitution. If he accepted the draft Constitution, he would have to relinquish his post as head of state to Brezhnev. If he didn't, he risked being voted out of the Politburo. Apparently, he chose to take the risk and lost.

⁵⁴Legum and Lee, p. A-43; The Guardian, 5 June 1977.

⁵⁵New York Times, 30 May 1977. Although Brezhnev assumed the presidency on 17 June, the Moscow correspondent of the Austrian newspaper Die Presse (Vienna) indicated on 29 May that Brezhnev had been unanimously elected chief of state at the same plenum that dismissed Podgorny on 25 May.

⁵⁶Times (London), 25 May 1977.

⁵⁷Foreign minister Gromyko was also present in the discussions with Castro between 4-8 April. Inasmuch as Brezhnev helped to secure his son's position as Head of the Africa Institute, it is doubtful that Gromyko would disagree with Brezhnev's stance on Ethiopia. Furthermore, the Africa Institute could be expected to tow the Brezhnev line, and it did. See n. 28 supra. See also Anatoly Gromyko, "The October Revolution and Africa's Destiny," International Affairs, n. 9 (September 1977): 95-103.

⁵⁸The Baltimore Sun, 28 October 1977.

⁵⁹De Borchgrave, pp. 42-43. Also, as previously noted, on 9 June a 15 man delegation headed by Somali security chief, Hamza Muhammad, left on a 30 day trip to Peking, presumably to request arms; see Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1977, p. 457. Judging from Barre's subsequent attempts to obtain arms from both East and West, it would appear that Peking was unable to fulfill Somalia's arms needs.

⁶⁰Admiral of the Fleet N.D. Sergeev may have been an additional bureaucratic casualty. In 1973 Admiral Sergeev, as Chief of the Main Naval Staff, told a Western naval attache that the search for bases was the most significant problem since the Navy's shift to forward deployment, (n. 12 supra). Conceivably, Admiral Sergeev would not favor support for Ethiopia, if it meant risking the sizeable investment in the base at Berbera. While Admiral Sergeev's actual position on the question of support for Ethiopia can not be determined, it is known that he was replaced as Chief of the Main Naval Staff in the summer of 1977. He was listed subsequently as Deputy Commander in Chief (without portfolio), indicating he was not given a follow on assignment. His name does not appear on recent lists, and he may have retired. See Donald C. Daniel, "Navy," in Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual 1977, ed. David R. Jones (Gulf Breeze, Fl.: Academic International Press, 1978), p. 194.

⁶¹Daily Telegraph (London), 23 February 1978.

⁶²Charles B. McLane, Soviet Third World Relations, Vol. 1: Soviet-Middle East Relations (London: Central Asian Research Center, 1973), p. 88.

⁶³Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, p. 34.

⁶⁴Arab Report and Record, 16-30 April 1977, p. 323.

⁶⁵Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1977, p. 502.

⁶⁶Mordechai Abir, Oil, Power and Politics: Conflict in Arabia, the Red Sea and the Gulf (London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1974), p. 95.

⁶⁷ Arab Report and Record, 1-15 April 1978, p. 260; Colin Legum, ed., Middle East Contemporary Survey (MECS), (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1979), p. 666. Part of the pressure from Arab governments came from Saudi Arabia which refused to implement a 1977 agreement to refine Saudi oil at the underutilized Aden refinery. See MECS, p. 662.

⁶⁸ Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1978, p. 420; Legum, MECS, p. 667.

⁶⁹ Abir, p. 91.

⁷⁰ Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1978, p. 455. President Ghashmi's efforts to pacify the Zaidi tribesman included allowing them representation in the Consultative Assembly which he created in February 1978. Ghashmi, himself, was the son of a northern tribal chieftan.

⁷¹ Tass, 12 June 1978. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 13 June 1978, p. F-2. See also Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1978, p. 420.

⁷² Europa, The Middle East and North Africa 1979-1980 (London: Europa Publications Limited, 1979), p. 854. According to this source, optimistic forecasts had predicted about 500 ships per month would be calling at Aden once the Suez Canal was reopened. However, by 1976 only 150 ships per month called at Aden compared with the 100 ships per month rate which existed prior to the canal's closure.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 855.

⁷⁴ Chu Yu, "International Commentary," U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, Translations from Red Flag, n. 4 (April 4, 1978), JPRS 71314 (Washington: 19 June 1978), p. 175, quoted in LCDR Charles T. Creekman, "Sino-Soviet Competition in the Yemens," Naval War College Review 32 (July-August 1979): 77.

⁷⁵ FBIS Soviet Union, 9 June 1978, p. C-1, quoted in Creekman, p. 77.

⁷⁶ Tass, 5 June 1978. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 6 June 1978.

⁷⁷ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) The Arms Trade with the Third World (New York: Humanities Press 1971), pp. 569-570; Richard F. Nyrop et al.; Area Handbook

for the Yemens (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1977), p. 145.

⁷⁸According to International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), The Military Balance (London: IISS, various years), three major Soviet arms agreements with South Yemen can be identified. These occurred in 1968, 1971, and 1979. The 1979 agreement was probably drawn up during the Spring of 1978. An additional agreement with East Germany, was reported to have been concluded in late 1977, see Defense and Foreign Affairs Handbook (London: Copley and Associates, 1978), p. 623.

⁷⁹SIPRI, p. 569. According to SIPRI, these aircraft were maintained by East European technicians.

⁸⁰Nyrop et al., p. 156.

⁸¹Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, p. 4.

⁸²Ibid., p. 3.

⁸³In April 1978, a pro-Soviet faction within the Somali government was nearly successful in overturning Siad Barre. The Somali President alledged that the attempted coup was sponsored by the "new imperialists", his code name for the Soviet Union. In Egypt, President Sadat headed off any possible coup attempt by arresting the pro-Soviet factions, headed by Ali Sabri and Sami Sharaf, well before he expelled Soviet military advisers. As for Ethiopia, a founding member of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) indicated to me that there were several pro-American officers connected with the Dergue. The EDU was founded as a result of the dissatisfaction of these officers with the radical policies and repression pursued by Mengistu. Members of the pro-Western opposition now believe America has "abandoned us."

⁸⁴According to sources within the EDU and the Eritrean liberation movement, the USSR is using Cuban soldiers to form the palace guard in South Yemen and Ethiopia, and East Germans are running the security/intelligence operations in both countries. In separate discussions one of these sources indicated that Soviet and Cuban help was decisive in thwarting a coup attempt on Mengistu in late September 1979. Another source indicated that there is a "subtle movement" within the military to remove Mengistu. However, independent confirmation of the September coup attempt was not available.

⁸⁵ Soviet foreign policy objectives, as related to arms transfers taken from Joseph P. Smaldone, "Soviet and Chinese Arms Transfers to Africa: A Contextual Analysis," in Warren Weinstein and Thomas H. Henriksen, eds., Africa's Alternatives (New York: Praeger, forthcoming), pp. 3-4. Soviet structural elements drawn from Edward J. Laurance, "Soviet Arms Transfers to Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns Purposes and Effects," paper presented at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School conference on Communist States and Africa, Monterey, Ca., 26-28 July 1979. In his paper Laurance integrates Soviet foreign policy objectives and structural elements with arms transfer demand factors for Sub-Saharan Africa. The subsequent analysis for South Yemen draws heavily on Laurance's integrative model.

⁸⁶ Basic demand factors adapted from Laurance, pp. 17-21, and modified to fit specific environment of South Yemen.

⁸⁷ V. Naumkin, "Southern Yemen: The Road to Progress," International Affairs 1 (January 1978): 64-69.

⁸⁸ Moscow Radio (in Arabic), 4 February 1978. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 6 February 1978, p. F-3.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. F-4.

⁹⁰ Presumably, Brezhnev and Kosygin could compare notes on the day's discussion between the acts of the opera they attended a few hours after their respective meetings with the Cuban and PDRY leaders. Other senior officials attending the opera that night included Politburo members M.S. Suslov, A.P. Kirilenko, Y.A. Pelshe, Defense Minister Ustinov; candidate member of the Politburo P.N. Demichev; and Warsaw Pact Commander V.G. Kulakov; see Pravda (Moscow), 2 February 1978.

⁹¹ Moscow Radio (in Arabic), 4 February 1978. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 6 February 1978, pp. F-4, F-6.

⁹² Moscow Radio (in Arabic), 2 February 1978. Appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 3 February 1978, p. F-3; see also FBIS Soviet Union, 1-6 February 1978.

⁹³ Daily Telegraph (London), 6, 8 April 1978; Moscow Domestic Service, 7 April 1978.

⁹⁴ Chairman Brezhnev's presence at these exercises, in the Far East, is particularly significant considering the fact that Ethiopian leader Mengistu was visiting Moscow during the same time period. See Pravda (Moscow), 7 April 1978, appearing in CDSP, 3 May 1978, p. 16. It is difficult to rationalize why Brezhnev would rather observe military exercises than consult directly with the leader of a nation in which c.20,000 Cubans, 3000 Soviet military technicians and 3-4 Soviet Generals were fighting a very real war. Perhaps this was Brezhnev's way of conveying his dissatisfaction with the Dergue leader for the latter's refusal to adopt a more conciliatory line on Eritrea and his footdragging on the establishment of an Ethiopian vanguard party. Further evidence of Moscow's ennui surfaced the following month while Mengistu was visiting Havana. During his absence, Cuban and South Yemeni diplomats, working with a pro-Moscow faction of the Dergue, smuggled Mengistu's arch-rival Negede Gobezie into Addis Ababa. Mengistu's discovery of the plot severely strained relations with his allies and led to additional purges within the Dergue.

⁹⁵ Aden Domestic Service, 18 May 1978. Appearing in FBIS Middle East Africa, 19 May 1978, p. C-3.

⁹⁶ Aden Domestic Service, 22 May 1978. Appearing in FBIS Middle East-Africa, 23 May 1978, p. C-6.

⁹⁷ Gulf News Agency (Manama), 22 May 1978. Appearing in FBIS Middle East-Africa, 23 May 1978, p. C-6.

⁹⁸ Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1978, p. 421.

⁹⁹ Pravda (Moscow), 7 June 1978.

¹⁰⁰ Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1978, p. 457; Legum, Middle East Contemporary Survey, p. 666; Arabia and the Gulf, 19 June 1978.

¹⁰¹ For Foreign Minister Muti's travels see Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1978, p. 420. For a report of the Mendelevich visit see Moscow Radio (in Arabic), 16 June 1978, appearing in FBIS Soviet Union, 19 June 1978, p. F-7.

¹⁰² Al-Anbaa (Kuwait), 28 June 1978, cited in Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1978, p. 456. See also Legum, Middle East Contemporary Survey, p. 666.

¹⁰³ Middle East Economic Digest, 30 June 1978, p. 15; Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1978, p. 455.

¹⁰⁴Newsweek, 10 July 1978, p. 39.

¹⁰⁵According to some reports President Ali's supporters began shelling various targets in the Tawahi quarter of Aden. The fallen President's target selection reflected his awareness of the persons who engineered his downfall: Central Committee building (Ismail's headquarters), the Prime Minister's office, the Defense Ministry, and the State Security Ministry, see Legum, Middle East Contemporary Survey, p. 659.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.; Arab Report and Record, 16-30 June 1978, p. 456; An-Nahar Arab Report and Memo, 17 July 1978. p. 8.

¹⁰⁷Central Intelligence Agency, Communist Aid Activities in Non-Communist Less Developed Countries 1978 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 35.

TABLE 4.1

Cumulative Value Estimation of Arms
Delivered to South Yemen 1968-1977
(Million Current Dollar)

	<u>Total</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>All Others</u>	<u>% USSR</u>
1968-1973	53	47	6	89
1973-1977	170	160	10	94
TOTAL	223	207	16	93

Data taken from U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms
Transfers 1963-1973 and 1968-1977 (Washington, D.C.:
U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975 and 1979).

TABLE 4.2

Soviet Supply Incentives

<u>Foreign Policy Objectives</u>	<u>Structural Elements</u>
Presence, Ability to Influence Events	Production/Surplus of Conventional Weapons
Undermine Western Influence	Military-Oriented Economy
Break Western Arms Supply Relationships	Debt
Expansion of Soviet Military Power	Growth of Soviet Navy
Internal Security of Clients/Allies	Supply Lines in Support of Clients
Support Wars of National Liberation	Centralized Logistics Procedures
Encourage Communist Movements	Inexperience in Overseas Logistics
Undermine PRC Influence	Surrogate Equipment Operators
Improve Balance of Payments	Experience in Internal Security Operations
Support Arab Cause	Ugly Russian

TABLE 4.3

Interaction of PDRY Demand Factors
and Patterns of Instability

Patterns of Instability

Demand Factors	Economic	Rural vs Urban	Inter-Personal	Irredentist	Religious	Cultural	Ethnic	Primordial	Ideological
Authoritarian Governments	x	x	x		x		x	x	
Low level of Economic Dev.		x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Under Militarized	x		x			x			
Strategic Location									
History of Colonialism	x	x		x					x
Intractable Conflicts			x	x	x		x	x	x
Lack of Arab Unity		x	x	x	x		x		x
Fear of Imperialism		x	x			x			x
Arab			x		x		x	x	

TABLE 4.4

Interaction of Soviet Foreign Policy
Objectives and PDRY Demand Factors

	Demand Factors						
	Authoritarian Govts. Low Level of Econ. Dev.	Under-Militarized Strategic Location	History of Colonialism Intractable Conflicts	Lack of Arab Unity	Fear of Imperialism	Arab	
Foreign Policy Objectives							
Presence, Ability to Influence Events		+		+	+	-	
Undermine Western Influence			+				
Break Western Arms Supply Relationships							
Expansion of Soviet Military Power		+		+	+		
Internal Security of Clients/ Allies	+	+		+			
Support Wars of National Liberation			+	+			
Encourage Communist Movements							
Undermine PRC Influence							
Improve Balance of Payments	-						
Support Arab Cause					+	+	

Format for Tables 4.4 and 4.5 adapted from Edward J. Laurance, "Soviet Arms Transfers to Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns Purposes and Effects," paper presented at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School Conference on Communist States and Africa, Monterey, Ca., 26-28 July 1979.

TABLE 4.5

Interaction of Soviet Structural
Elements and PDRY Demand Factors

Structural Elements	Demand Factors							
	Authoritarian Govts.	Low Level of Econ. Dev.	Under-Militarized	Strategic Location	History of Colonialism	Intractable Conflicts	Lack of Arab Unity	Fear of Imperialism
Arab								
Production/Surplus of Conventional Weapons		+	+					
Military-oriented Economy		-	+					
Debt		-						
Growth of Soviet Navy			+	+	-	+		-
Supply Lines in Support of Clients	+		+	+				
Centralized Logistics Procedures								
Inexperienced in Overseas Logistics								
Surrogate Equipment Operators			+			+		
Experience in Internal Security Operations	+							
Ugly Russian					-		-	-

V. THE NAVAL ELEMENT IN SOVIET STRATEGY
FOR THE RED SEA BASIN

In December 1888 a Russian expedition under the command of a Cossack officer, N.I. Ashinov, sailed from Odessa with the expressed mission of establishing a colony at Obok, near present day Djibouti. Tsar Alexander III accorded tacit approval to the colonial enterprise designed to counter the British presence in Egypt and Aden, and to strengthen ties with the French who maintained a strong presence in Djibouti. Nevertheless, Alexander was highly suspicious of the adventurous Ashinov whom he described as a "sly old fox who will dupe everyone, rob everyone and throw them out."¹ To allay his concerns and to protect the colonists, Alexander ordered his Minister of the Navy, Admiral Shsetakov, to dispatch the gunboat MANJUR to the Red Sea. However, the Russian gunboat was no match for the French Red Sea Squadron, under Admiral Orly, which bombarded "New Moscow" in February 1889 in response to Ashinov's staunch refusal to recognize French sovereignty over the area. Some ninety years later Soviet Russia again is engaged in an imperial adventure in the Red Sea basin. In the current gambit, Russia's strategic interest in the region is matched by a global naval and maritime capability. This capability is described proudly by Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Sergei G. Gorshkov:

Our country has built a modern navy and sent it out into the ocean in order to support our own state interests and to reliably defend us from attack from the vast ocean sectors.²

What role do the Soviet naval and maritime fleets play in pursuing Russian "state interests" in the Red Sea Basin? Are these blue water fleets significant and even decisive elements of Soviet strategy in the region? The first clue to answering these questions is found by examining the unparalleled rise of the Soviet naval and civilian fleets in the post-Stalin era.

Secondly, one must assess the geostrategic position of the Red Sea basin within the context of the wartime and peacetime missions of the Soviet Navy. Finally, by analyzing specific instances of Soviet naval diplomacy in the region, the naval and maritime elements of Russia's strategy for the Red Sea basin can be determined.

A. POST-STALIN NAVAL EXPANSION

The Soviet Navy has undergone unparalleled growth since the death of Stalin. This is not to imply that Stalin did not favor a large navy. As the figures in Table 5.1 show, in terms of numbers, current naval force levels are less than those in the years immediately following Stalin's death. Indeed, as James McConnell has noted, "the era of greatest quantitative expansion was under Stalin."³ According to Robert Herrick, Stalin intended this expansion to continue even to the point of building aircraft carriers which had proven their efficiency in World War II.⁴

Table 5.1 highlights the striking contrast, in terms of assets, between the U.S. and the USSR. Although American naval capabilities generally are considered superior to their

Soviet counterparts, one must wonder at which point the trade-off between numbers and capabilities slants decisively in favor of the former.

The post-Khrushchev era marked the beginning of a significant trend in Soviet naval development. This trend comprised the dual elements of construction and operation. In construction, heavy emphasis was placed on building ASW surface platforms. Every major and most minor surface combatants introduced since 1965 were designed with ASW as their primary mission.

The mid 1960's also witnessed the construction of larger amphibious vessels. Khrushchev had curtailed the amphibious ship building program on the grounds that "we have no need for those vessels that are used by countries like the U.S. to pursue aggressive and imperialist goals."⁵ After Khrushchev's fall the navy embarked on an expanded building program which doubled the amphibious ship tonnage (60 to 140k tons) in the period 1966 to 1976.

Operationally, the post-Khrushchev era ushered in the trend to forward deployment of the Soviet Navy. The underlying concept was to "extend the Soviet Union's maritime defense perimeters to cover the sea areas from which nuclear strikes could be launched" against the USSR.⁶ Russian naval forces operationalized this concept in 1963 with their first deployment to the Mediterranean. This was followed by deployments to the Indian Ocean in 1968, the Caribbean in 1969 and the Eastern Atlantic in 1970.

Once a regional presence was established, Moscow realized the potential of naval units to influence the political and military course of events in an area. Gorshkov reiterates this political utility in Sea Power of the State:

In many cases naval demonstrations have made it possible to achieve political goals, without resorting to an armed struggle merely by exerting pressure through one's own "potential" power and by threatening to initiate military hostilities.⁷

This rather Mahanesque justification has been operationalized repeatedly during the era of forward deployment. The nations of the Third World serve as the targets for the functional employment of Admiral Gorshkov's "naval demonstrations."

B. EXPANSION OF CIVILIAN FLEETS

In addition to the navy, Admiral Gorshkov categorizes the merchant, fishing, and oceanographic research fleets as "among the main components which we include in the concept of the sea power of the state."⁸ The expansion experienced by these "civilian" fleets in the post-Stalin era has been both consistent and substantial.

Regarding the merchant fleet, an accelerated construction program was necessary to bring Soviet seaborne transit capabilities in line with the increased foreign trade ushered in by the era of peaceful coexistence. This program produced dramatic results as can be seen from Table 5.2. From 1959 to 1965 the Soviet merchant fleet showed a net increase of 400 units and more than doubled its deadweight tonnage (DWT). As Table 5.2 shows, this growth has continued although less

dramatically during the Brezhnev years. According to the maritime administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 1977 the merchant fleet of the USSR ranked second in the world (to Liberia) registering 2456 vessels in service.⁹

The Soviet fishing fleet has experienced tremendous growth in the post-Stalin era. The most dramatic changes in the fleet's strength occurred during the Khrushchev era when seven of the thirteen largest ship building facilities were reassigned to the construction of fish-factory and merchant ships.¹⁰ The results of this investment are reflected in Table 5.3. Between 1955 and 1965 the Soviets more than doubled the number of vessels and the Gross Registered Tonnage of their fishing fleet. During this same period the USSR expanded its operation to distant areas and more than doubled its total catch. This across the board increase has continued during the Brezhnev era. Today, the Soviet fishing fleet ranks first in the world with respect to number of units and registered tonnage.¹¹ The USSR has "relations in fisheries" with over 50 countries and extends some form of fishery aid to 30 states.¹² The majority of these agreements are with the nations of the Third World.

The Soviet oceanographic research fleet was not overlooked in the sea power expansion of the post-Stalin era. Continued investment in the research fleet enabled the USSR to surpass the United States fleet in 1964. In 1978 Russia's oceanographic fleet was, by far, largest in the world with 157 civilian ships and over 58% of the world's GRT for research

vessels.¹³ It has been rumored that the Soviet Navy has an equal amount of vessels assigned for oceanographic tasks.

Russia's oceanographic fleet performs economic and military related functions which complement the naval, merchant and fishing fleets. In a revealing statement, Soviet Admiral V.D. Yakovlev summed up one main task of the research fleet as follows:

Hydrographic ships are responsible for installing the required navigational equipment in a naval theatre (i.e., target location) and also for carrying out diverse tasks. Navigational hydrographic support consists of complex measures aimed at equipping a theatre with navigational devices for enabling aircraft and ships...to determine with great accuracy their precise location while at sea and located at great distance from their bases.¹⁴

In view of these tasks, the oceanographic research fleet serves as the expeditionary force in the blue water expansion of the Soviet naval and civilian fleets.

C. OPERATIONAL TREND TOWARDS THE THIRD WORLD

The foregoing discussion deals primarily with the tremendous expansion of Soviet naval and maritime capabilities in the post-Stalin era. This growth in the elements of Russian sea power has been marked by an operational trend towards utilization in the Third World arena. The nations littoral to the Red Sea basin constitute a volatile portion of this arena. As such, Soviet naval and maritime interactions in the Red Sea basin must be reviewed within the context of the overall trend towards Third World operations.

Richard Ackley has noted that the Soviet fishing fleet has provided the "entree for Russian presence and subsequent influence" in regional areas.¹⁵ Ackley's conclusion reflects the general pattern characteristic of the operational trend towards Soviet seapower utilization in the Third World. Russia's civilian fleets establish the initial presence in an area, and are followed by the Soviet Navy whose task is to protect the USSR's new found "state interests" in the region.

Within this pattern various indications may be used to substantiate the shift to Third World employment. Between 1964 and 1976 the Soviet Union has negotiated fisheries aid agreements with 36 nations of the Third World.¹⁶ In many of these nations Moscow has combined the aid agreements with the formulation of joint fishing companies. Table 5.4 lists those developing countries wherein both aid and joint company ventures have been concluded. Within the Red Sea Basin, Somalia, North and South Yemen receive fishery aid. In South Yemen this aid is combined with a joint fishing venture.

Soviet merchant ship visits to developing nations provides an additional indication of the trend toward Third World operations. As the data in Table 5.5 shows, 75% of Soviet merchant ship visits between 1967 and 1970 have been to Third World states. This average rose to 82% by 1974. To support increased merchant ship activity Moscow extends economic assistance to construct or upgrade local port facilities. Within the Red Sea Basin the USSR has developed port facilities in Hodeida, North Yemen and Berbera, Somalia.

Interestingly enough, these ports were completed prior to the ascendance of pro-Soviet regimes in each country.¹⁷ To accommodate increased traffic, a separate cargo line was established between Vladivostok and Somalia in November 1971.¹⁸ More recently, in 1979, the USSR has concluded a maritime agreement with Ethiopia with whom its trade has increased by a factor of 15 since the 1974 revolution.¹⁹ Obviously, as the case of Berbera proves, these agreements and port facilities are not always intended for commercial uses. Yet, Berbera had been in operation for over three years before the Soviet-Somali agreement to develop its potential as a naval base was concluded. This agreement, signed during Defense Minister Grechko's visit to Somalia in February 1972, was perhaps a direct result of the imminent expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt. Furthermore, the Berbera missile handling and storage facility, communications station and housing compound were all completed after 1972.²⁰

Recently, East Germany has emerged as a major partner of the USSR in port development projects in the Third World. Currently the GDR is upgrading port facilities in Lobito, Mocamedes, Luanda (Angola), Maputo (Mozambique) Assab and Massawa (Ethiopia). The development of Massawa includes removing war damage and constructing a drydock capable of accommodating cruiser-size vessels. In South Yemen, East Germany is supervising the expansion of the fishing port of Barim.²¹

During this period of maritime expansion the oceanographic fleet conducted exhaustive research of the world's oceans. Perhaps most indicative of the oceanographic element in the operational trend toward Third World deployment was the Soviet Union's participation in the International Indian Ocean Expedition. The USSR assigned five research vessels to this expedition conducted from 1960 to 1965. Moreover, in the years subsequent to the expedition it has been the most active of all non-littoral nations conducting oceanographic studies in the area.²² Such extensive research betrays a strong desire, now fulfilled, to exploit the naval and maritime potential of an ocean whose waves abut the world's most intense concentration of developing nations.

"Of all the branches of the armed forces," Admiral Gorshkov claims, "the Navy is to the greatest degree capable of supporting the state interests of the country beyond its borders."²³ Accordingly, it is no wonder that the outward expansion of civilian fleet operations was matched by a concurrent shift to forward deployment by a qualitatively improved and constantly maturing Soviet Navy. Indications of this shift to forward deployment surfaced during "the year of the long cruise" in 1963 when a contingent of submarines and surface ships appeared in the Mediterranean Sea. The modest effort was increased dramatically in the ensuing years. In the period from 1965 to 1974, Soviet Navy out-of-area ship days rose from 6,500 to 52,800, an average annual increase of 5144 ship days. By comparison, U.S. Navy out-of-area ship days decreased by 44% during the same period.²⁴

As with the civilian fleets, and perhaps because of them, the regional focus for distant operations centered on the nations of the Third World. Between 1967 and 1976 the majority of all nations visited by Soviet naval vessels were located in the Third World.²⁵ By separating Soviet naval port visits into two components, diplomatic and operational, a much sharper indication of the trend toward Third World operations is revealed. Operational port visits are defined as those necessary to replenish stores, refuel and provide crew rest. Diplomatic visits are carefully planned and formally executed events with strong political overtones.²⁶ From Table 5.6 it can be seen that 95% of all Soviet naval visits between 1967 and 1976 were to less developed countries. Furthermore, 96% of all operational and 82% of all diplomatic port visits were conducted in the Third World. With respect to the Red Sea basin, diplomatic port visits numbered less than those conducted in developed countries. Yet, operational port visits, to Ethiopia, Somalia, North and South Yemen, were nearly three times greater than those to developed countries. Operational port visits to this region were more than twice as numerous as the combined total of visits to developed countries. This overabundance of operational port visits suggests a Soviet desire to maintain an increased naval presence in the surrounding waters, specifically the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean. More importantly, these figures reflect a distinct Soviet intention to utilize the nations of the Red Sea basin to sustain this increased naval presence.

Figure 5.1 presents a graphic representation of this increased naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Beginning with a negligible presence in 1965, the USSR dramatically expanded its Indian Ocean naval operations, achieving a high point of 10,500 ship days in 1974. Since then annual Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean has averaged over 7500 ship-days, with fluctuations occurring during periods of calm or conflict. The Soviet Indian Ocean squadron usually consists of about 18-20 ships roughly half of which are naval support vessels. Naval combatants generally include 1 submarine, 1 SSM cruiser, 2 escorts, 3 minesweeping craft and 1 amphibious vessel. Prior to their expulsion in November 1977, the Soviet naval air arm utilized Somali airfields to support TU-96D BEAR and IL-38 MAY reconnaissance flights over the Indian Ocean.²⁷ A breakdown of the Indian Ocean squadron's ship days, by ship type, for the period 1977 through 1979 is presented in Table 5.7. This data reflects the importance accorded to Soviet auxiliaries, whose ship days comprise roughly half the total in each year. Major and minor combatants make up the second largest number of ship days with the presence of major combatants steadily increasing. The squadron's large percentage of support vessels reflects the difficulties associated with maintaining a continuous Indian Ocean presence and the concomitant importance of acquiring base facilities.

D. THE RED SEA BASIN AND THE MISSION OF THE SOVIET NAVY

The foregoing discussion describes the substantial expansion of Soviet naval and maritime capabilities and the trend

towards utilizing these assets in the Third World. Within this trend descriptive indicators have reflected the importance attached to the Indian Ocean and specifically the Red Sea basin. Why has the Red Sea basin received such attention? What position does this volatile cul-de-sac occupy in the overall framework of Soviet military strategy? To answer these questions, consideration is directed first to the Soviet strategic concept of area defense zones. Secondly, the mission of the Soviet Navy, as it applies to this concept, is examined from the geostrategic perspective of the Red Sea basin.

In both its Imperial and Soviet history, Russia has been subject to countless invasions from both East and West. The spectre of constant invasion imbues the Russian psyche with an almost paranoid sense of insecurity. Whether it be Tartars, Mongols, Chinese, French, Germans or even Americans, somebody is always coming! Translated into Soviet military philosophy this sense of insecurity emerges in the doctrinal principle known as "defense of the homeland." In support of this objective, the Soviet Navy employs the strategic concept of inner and outer defense zones.²⁸ The perimeter of the inner defense zone coincides with the geographical restrictions imposed by nature on the extension of Soviet sea power: the Danish Straits, Turkish Straits and the ice-packed waters off northern Russia. The outer zone begins at this point and continues in accordance with the extent of Soviet naval capabilities. Within the inner defense zone, the four

fleets rely on superiority of force to establish control of contiguous seas at the outset of hostilities. Sea control in the outer defense zone would be actively contested throughout the war.

The Soviet concept of sea control differs from the western notion which according to Admiral Gorshkov, equates to "control of the world."²⁹ Notwithstanding this Freudian slip, Admiral Gorshkov asserts that sea control is viewed:

as a path to establishing certain conditions which would permit naval forces and resources to successfully accomplish one mission or another in certain regions of a theater within a specific period of time.³⁰

Soviet naval science divides sea control into strategic and operational components:

Whereas strategic control serves the goals of waging a war or campaign, operational control serves the goals of conducting an operation...or an individual engagement.³¹

When applied to the theory of area defense, strategic control is employed in the inner defense zone while operational control is sought for specific engagements in the outer zone.

Admiral Gorshkov notes that during the Great Patriotic War (WWII) the inability to establish strategic control in the seas contiguous to the USSR was "quite typical of that period of time".³² Accordingly, in the post war years, up until 1961, the Soviet navy's main concern

was to extend the inner zone of effective command to the natural defensive barriers, which would be seized by Soviet forces in the event of war. The outer zones did not extend very far beyond these geographic constrictions.³³

With the advent of Polaris missile submarines in 1961, the outer defense perimeter was extended to include the East China, Norwegian and North Seas and the Eastern Mediterranean Basin. According to Michael McGwire the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean including the approaches to the Persian Gulf, has become a "latent outer defense zone":

In the event of war the Soviet Union is likely to move south to control the Gulf, and will need naval forces to fend off assaults by U.S. strike carriers and amphibious groups.³⁴

Moscow also must contend with the possibility of a future war with its far eastern neighbor:

In the event of a future war with China, the Soviet Union must be prepared to supply its Far Eastern Front by sea, and to protect such shipments against attacks by Chinese naval forces...³⁵

The escalating intensity of the Sino-Soviet conflict, the free world's increasing dependence on Persian Gulf oil and the constantly improving capabilities of the Soviet Navy combine to transform this inherently unstable region from a latent to a very real outer defense zone. One option available to the Soviet Union to interdict the flow of oil to the West is to stop the flow at its source by, e.g., bombing well-heads. However, there is reason to argue that this option may not be an attractive one. The USSR may want not to alienate any Arab oil powers by striking against them. They may prefer to strike at the carriers of oil once they are beyond the territorial limits of any Arab state. This would be a task for the Soviet Navy. Accordingly, the Red

Sea basin occupies a vital geostrategic position within this outer defense zone. It provides the time critical, all-weather, maritime conduit between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Arabian Seas. Once war has begun, it is probable that the only realistic source of Soviet naval forces for operations in the Arabian Sea will come from the Eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, while strategic control would be preferable, operational sea control of this conduit is an important precondition for Soviet success in a prolonged war with the U.S., China or a not inconceivable alliance of both nations.

In order for the Soviet Navy to gain sea control in any maritime theater, certain conditions must be established. In Admiral Gorshkov's estimation this process "has always required lengthy periods of time and the execution of measures while still at peace". Among other things these peacetime measures include:

concentration of groupings of forces and disposing them in a theater in such a manner that they will have superiority of position over the enemy... providing of facilities in the sea and oceanic theaters of military operations...and a base system appropriate to their mission.³⁶

Soviet naval activity in the Red Sea basin and northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean relates directly to the implementation of these "measures". The substantial lead in Indian Ocean ship days maintained by the USSR over the U.S. facilitates the establishment of the infrastructure required to attain "superiority of position" should hostilities occur.

The large percentage of support vessels in the Indian Ocean squadron provides "facilities in the sea and oceanic theaters of military operations". Finally, Soviet efforts to establish base facilities, first in Berbera and subsequently in Aden, Mukalla and across the Bab el Mandeb in the Dahlach Islands, constitute an attempt to furnish the Indian Ocean squadron with "a base system appropriate to their mission".

The "appropriate mission" of the Soviet Navy is derived from strategic concepts, such as area defense. It varies in peace and war and according to the maritime theater concerned. A review of Soviet military literature reveals a basic combination of six wartime and three peacetime missions:

1. Wartime Missions

- a. Strategic nuclear strike
- b. Destroying the enemy fleet at sea and in its bases
- c. Disrupting enemy ocean and sea lanes and protecting own sea lanes (SLOC warfare)
- d. Supporting ground forces
- e. Landing naval assault forces and repulsing similar landing operations
- f. Transporting troops and material, evacuating sick and wounded

2. Peacetime Missions

- a. Passive affirmation, i.e., existence of a large naval force affirms USSR's position as a great power
- b. Strengthening of friendship between the USSR and other nations
- c. Demonstrating naval power in accordance with state interests.³⁷

While all of these missions may relate to naval activity in the Red Sea basin, some are certainly more "appropriate" than others. Regarding wartime missions, SLOC warfare and transporting troops and materials apply directly to the Red Sea basin, whose geostrategic significance is emphasized by the Soviet weekly, New Times:

important sea lanes, linking the oil producing countries with American and Europe pass through the region. Seventy percent of the raw materials imported by Western Europe are carried along these routes.³⁸

At the outbreak of hostilities Soviet naval forces, already on station, can be expected to interdict these vital sea lanes. Should the opponent be China, Soviet naval forces in the Red Sea basin would function to protect own sea lanes as Russian troops and material are transported, via the Suez Canal, to the Far Eastern front. Depending on the tactical situation, the remaining wartime missions may become "appropriate" to the Red Sea theater. An attack by naval assault landing forces or Soviet ground forces on Persian Gulf oil fields, for example, would be supported by naval units on station in the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean. An attack of this nature would affect the "military-economic potential" of the West, and thus fulfill a portion of the strategic strike mission.

Currently, the most "appropriate missions" of the Soviet Navy in the Red Sea Basin are the peacetime missions. In contrast to the wartime categories, no speculation or extrapolation from military literature is required to substantiate

Soviet naval activity in support of these missions. Numerous examples of their actively pursuing these peacetime missions proliferate the recent history of the Red Sea basin. During the last decade of Emperor Haile Selassie's reign, Russian warships were regular participants in the Navy Day celebrations at Massawa. Admiral Gorshkov joined this regular contingent for the festivities in January 1967.³⁹ During their initial deployment to the Indian Ocean in 1968, Soviet warships paid the first of many port calls to Somalia and South Yemen. These early visits were designed to accomplish the passive affirmation and strengthening of friendship roles. However, beginning in 1969 when Soviet warships pulled into Somalia, signifying Moscow's support for the new government under Siad Barre, these two missions were joined by a marked trend towards demonstrating Soviet naval power in support of the USSR's state interests. The high point of this trend occurred in 1977-1978 when Soviet naval units actively supported Ethiopia during the latter's conflicts with Eritrea and Somalia. Buoyed by the confidence and experience gained from this operation and similar, though less substantial, activity off Angola in 1976, the Soviet Navy can be expected to flex its muscle on a frequent basis in the simultaneous execution of its three peacetime missions in the Red Sea basin.

E. SOVIET NAVAL DIPLOMACY IN THE RED SEA BASIN

Diplomacy can be defined as the composite of interactions among nations to achieve foreign policy goals. The various

tools used to achieve these goals become the adjective modifiers to the diplomatic process. Thus, it is not uncommon to see instrumentally related terms such as economic diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and even "ping-pong" diplomacy used to characterize the foreign policy interactions between states. Accordingly, naval power utilized "directly in the service of foreign policy" becomes naval diplomacy.⁴⁰

Naval diplomacy, of itself, is not a new phenomenon. One could even argue that naval diplomacy was the decisive element of Noah's foreign policy during the great flood. Yet, for the Soviet Union, effective utilization of naval power as an instrument of foreign policy is a comparatively recent development, made possible by the tremendous expansion of naval capabilities in the post-Stalin era. Admiral Gorshkov emphasized this new development in the summer of 1977:

It should be stated that the Soviet Navy has also begun participating actively in the foreign policy measures and actions of our state...Ocean cruises and consequently, visits by our warships to foreign ports are growing in scope with every year. Soviet diplomats view such visits as a tremendous aid to Soviet diplomacy in reinforcing the Soviet Union's authority in the international arena and strengthening our country's friendship and cooperation with many countries in the world.⁴¹

By performing its peacetime missions in the Red Sea basin the Soviet Navy acts as an instrument of Russian foreign policy. In essence, these activities constitute Soviet naval diplomacy in the region. The following three cases illustrate the utility of Soviet naval diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy in the Red Sea basin.

1. In Support of Siad Barre

On October 15, 1969 President Shermarke of Somalia was assassinated by a disgruntled member of an opposing clan. Six days later the Army, under General Mohammad Siad Barre, seized power. The Somali Army was decidedly pro-Soviet. Moscow had provided military aid to Somalia since 1963, and many army officers had been trained in the Soviet Union. Accordingly, Barre's ascension to power afforded Moscow the opportunity to reinforce and expand its economic, political and military investments in Somalia. These investments were substantial. In addition to \$30 million in arms assistance, Moscow extended \$45 million in credit agreements and \$8 million in trade credits to the new nation. Soviet projects in Somalia included construction of hospitals, schools, food plants, a dam, a radio station and the just finished deep-water port at Berbera.⁴²

Whether or not the Kremlin engineered the Barre coup is speculative. Nevertheless, Soviet naval activity in the subsequent months confirmed Moscow's support for the new regime. In November and December Russian warships conducted a much publicized series of visits to Berbera, Mogadishu and Chisimao. These units included a KRESTA I rocket cruiser and a KASHIN missile destroyer. This utilization of naval vessels to signify Kremlin support for a new regime constituted a first for the USSR.⁴³ With the demonstrative backing of the Soviet Union, Siad Barre began the consolidation of his government.

The consolidation did not proceed smoothly, and by mid-April Barre was again in difficult straits. On April 27, Mogadishu Domestic Service reported that plans for a counter-coup had been discovered. About ten days prior to this report a KYNDA rocket cruiser and a FOXTROT submarine paid an official visit to the capital city of Mogadishu. A KRUPNYY surface to surface missile destroyer entered Berbera on the same day.⁴⁴ These visits coincided with the start of the Soviet worldwide naval exercise, OKEAN 70, and were followed by numerous operational visits over the next two weeks. The FOXTROT submarine remained in Mogadishu until May 2. The presence of these naval vessels during a period of internal instability once again provided a graphic indication of Soviet support for Siad Barre. In this regard the presence of Russia's warships in Somali waters for OKEAN 70 was most convenient. Certainly, the capability of these warships to deter would-be counter-revolutionaries was not lost on Siad Barre. This deterrent capability combined with the availability of units, due to OKEAN 70, presented General Barre with an opportune time to purge undesirable elements from his junta. Whether Siad Barre exploited the Soviet naval presence to achieve his own aims, or the Kremlin utilized the Navy to save Barre may never be known. In either case, the mere presence of Soviet naval units in Somali ports, during late 1969 and early 1970, served to link, in a highly visible manner, the foreign policy goals of Moscow to the regime of Siad Barre. This use of naval diplomacy contributed

to strengthening Soviet-Somali friendship, which reached the highwater mark in 1974 with the signing of a Friendship and Cooperation Treaty. Events in Ethiopia during this same year were to have a decisive impact on the course of this friendship.

2. The Conflict in the Horn

In September 1974 the aging Lion of Judah, Haile Selassie, was deposed by a group of military officers known collectively as the Dergue. Although the former emperor had maintained polite relations with the USSR, he was decidedly pro-West. Accordingly, Moscow adopted a wait and see attitude towards the revolutionary regime in Addis Ababa. In early 1976 indications of a shift in Soviet attitude became apparent. A Radio Moscow broadcast on 24 April noted:

the strength of the Ethiopian revolution lies in its very inevitability in the world revolutionary process...[its] progress puzzles the uninitiated, maddens its enemies and is a source of satisfaction for the true friends of the new Ethiopia.⁴⁵

In July 1976, the first contingent of Dergue officers visited Moscow. Throughout the summer and fall of 1976, popular opposition to the repressive and bloody policies of Ethiopian strongman, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, continued to mount. By December, with roughly 13 separate opposition movements pressuring the government, Mengistu's regime was in dire straits. During December a delegation of the Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC), Ethiopia's senior governmental body, visited Moscow. Reportedly, a secret and

"conditional" military assistance agreement was concluded during this visit.⁴⁶ One of the conditions became apparent on December 30 when Addis Ababa Domestic Service announced a revision of the organizational set-up and function of the PMAC:

Under the new set-up, the direction and leadership of the PMAC will be along Marxist-Leninist principles...The new organizational set-up...is made up of a congress...a central committee made up of 40 members...and a standing committee comprising 17 members.⁴⁷

In both principle and structure, Ethiopia appeared to adopt the Soviet model. In March, a Soviet cargo vessel bearing the first installment of Russian arms, T-34 tanks and BTR 152s, docked at Assab.⁴⁸ Mengistu fulfilled the second condition by severing military ties with the U.S. in April. During a visit to Moscow the next month Mengistu signed a military aid agreement estimated at \$400 million. Shortly thereafter the first contingent of Cuban advisors, about 50, arrived in Ethiopia.⁴⁹ As these events were unfolding, Siad Barre, increasingly suspicious of Moscow's intentions, received overtures of arms assistance from Washington. Buoyed by these ambiguous offers, he unleashed regular Somali army troops into the Ogaden on 23 July.⁵⁰

Moscow's foreign policy goals envisaged a confederation of progressive states in the Horn of Africa. Mediations with Somalia during the spring and summer of 1979 failed to gain Barre's consent to withdrawal from the Ogaden where Soviet-trained insurgents were chalking up successive victories.

Soviet arms shipments to Somalia ceased in October as relations between the two nations continued to disintegrate. During this period Moscow altered its policy from supporting both nations to supporting Ethiopia over Somalia. Siad Barre responded on November 13 by expelling all Soviet and Cuban advisers from Somalia.

Moscow's foreign policy goals for the Horn of Africa now hinged on the fate of Mengistu's regime. If Mengistu succumbed to the combined pressures of Somali insurgents, Eritrean liberation forces and the myriad of other opposition groups in Ethiopia, Soviet influence in the Red Sea basin would be drastically reduced. Accordingly, the USSR initiated a massive military assistance program, comprised of Soviet weapons and advisers and Cuban troops, designed to sustain the regime in Addis Ababa. Beginning with the launching of a reconnaissance satellite on November 26, military diplomacy was the instrument of Soviet foreign policy in the Horn of Africa.⁵¹

The naval element of this diplomacy was the most significant instance of Soviet naval diplomacy in the post-Stalin era. In a dramatic presentation of sea power, the Russian Navy provided protection to Soviet/bloc merchant ships transporting troops and arms, ferried equipment from Aden to Assab and Massawa and established operational sea control in the Red Sea Basin.

During the conflict, the Soviet merchant marine showed its efficacy as an element of sea power. In February

1978 Soviet passenger ships were estimated to have carried 3000-5000 Cuban troops to the Horn.⁵² Soviet and East European cargo ships transported T54/44 tanks, MIG aircraft, missiles and 120mm artillery from the Black Sea ports of Odessa and Sevastopol to Ethiopian ports south of Massawa.⁵³ Soviet cargo ships also discharged war materials in the vicinity of the South Yemeni airstrip at Khormaksar where it was then flown on a 500 mile trip to Addis Ababa. Heavy equipment airlifted to Aden, on AN-22 and IL-76 transports, was ferried by amphibious vessels across the Bab el Mandeb to landing stages south of Massawa.⁵⁴ Reportedly, two Soviet POLNOCHNY Class landing ships, officially belonging to South Yemen, were used extensively in this regard.⁵⁵ The Soviet sealift to Ethiopia involving some 36 freighters, was combined with a massive and unprecedented airlift. Together, by June 1978, these air and sea transports delivered over 60,000 tons of military equipment to Ethiopia.⁵⁶

Russian naval combatants in the Mediterranean and Red Seas provided protection to Soviet/Bloc merchantment enroute to Ethiopia and South Yemen. In an effort to establish sea control in the theater, the Soviet Indian Ocean squadron operated in the Gulf of Aden "seemingly as an interposition force between the resupply and other potentially hostile fleets."⁵⁷ Additionally, it is speculated that Russian and Ethiopian naval units attempted to establish some sort of protective zone around Assab and Massawa. Conclusive evidence in this regard is not available. Nevertheless, on 18

January the British Foreign Office called upon British shippers to avoid Massawa, and civilian aircraft departing Djibouti came under anti-aircraft fire if they strayed within 12 miles of Assab.⁵⁸

One reason to establish protective zones around Assab and Massawa would be to prevent unwanted onlookers from observing Russian naval activity within the area. During January 1978 Massawa came under heavy attack by Eritrean forces. To counter this attack Massawa was subjected to heavy naval and air bombardment. While evidence of this bombardment is conclusive, the true identity of the firing vessels, stationed six miles off the coast, can not be independently confirmed.⁵⁹ However, in another instance an independent observer reported a Soviet ALLIGATOR class amphibious ship firing missile salvos on Massawa, as Ethiopian forces were being evacuated. The observer, a Greek merchant skipper, asserted:

That was a Russian support vessel. The landing craft were taking rocket launchers (the truck mounted Katyushas) out to it - and I think those on the ship knew how to use them. I watched them firing salvos of 25 rockets at the Eritreans, but on the land the Ethiopians have only been sending five or six at once.⁶⁰

Up until this point, the Soviet Navy had not fired a shot in anger since World War II. Should these reports be true, the Soviet Navy will have achieved the highest level of naval diplomacy: direct military involvement in support of an imperialist foreign policy.

To be sure, the Soviet Navy was but one of the elements of military diplomacy utilized to sustain the Mengistu regime. Roughly 20,000 Cuban troops and 1,000 Soviet advisers, all under the Command of General V.I. Petrov, were perhaps the most significant elements of military diplomacy used to forestall an Ethiopian defeat.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the USSR's capability to "fight until the last Cuban" in Ethiopia would have been impossible without the active involvement of the Soviet naval and maritime fleets.

3. Protecting a Favored Client in Aden

Across the Bab el Mandeb, in South Yemen, a very sophisticated, though less publicized, example of naval diplomacy unfolded during the ensanguined summer of 1978. In the two day period between 24 and 26 June the leaders of both North and South Yemen were ruthlessly assassinated. The executed leader of South Yemen, Salim Robaye Ali was accused of "crimes against the state" which included cooperation with "reactionary and imperialist circles".⁶² In reality President Ali had championed a more moderate course in foreign affairs. Rather than depend solely on the USSR for aid, Ali pursued a multilateral path. In 1970, a Chinese aid delegation visited Aden, and Ali himself visited China later that year.⁶³ In the interest of receiving aid, Ali sought a reconciliation with Saudi Arabia. Diplomatic relations between the two nations were established in March 1976. Although these relations were suspended in late 1977, progress toward rapprochement was achieved by the visit of South Yemen's

Interior Minister to Saudi Arabia in April 1978. Concurrently, Ali intended to improve relations with the West and specifically with the United States. Interestingly enough, a special U.S. delegation, headed by Mr. Joseph Twinam, was scheduled to visit Aden and discuss the resumption of relations at the precise time of Ali's assassination. In view of their expulsion from Somalia and the tenuous situation in Ethiopia, Moscow could hardly be pleased with Ali's multilateral diplomatic offensive. Berbera was lost, and the fighting in Eritrea and the Ogaden undecided. Accordingly, Moscow's foreign policy goals for the Red Sea Basin depended on a staunchly pro-Soviet regime in Aden.

The bizarre circumstances surrounding the death of the two Yemen Presidents, in June 1978, remain a tangled web spun in grand Arabian fashion. While conclusive proof of direct Soviet involvement in Ali's death is not available, strong circumstantial evidence exists to show they were not merely innocent bystanders.⁶⁴

The Soviet Navy figures prominently in events both before and after President Ali's untimely demise. In the month preceeding Ali's death, Admiral Gorshkov went to Aden. He met not with Ali, but with his imminently ascendent successor, Abdel Fattah Ismail, and his colleague, Minister of Defense Ali Nasir Antar.⁶⁵ The South Yemeni Defense Minister accompanied Admiral Gorshkov on his return trip to Moscow, and visited several East European countries on his way back to Aden. Reportedly, Gorshkov's visit resulted in the signing

of a secret 15 year military agreement between the two nations. The terms of this substantial agreement included permission to station warships at Perim, Island and to construct a naval base (probably at Mukalla) with repair, storage, communication and monitoring facilities for the Soviet Navy. The agreement also called for the building of an air force base and a medical facility. Moscow agreed to provide South Yemen with 30 MIG fighters, 5 fast patrol boats and a major radar network. Furthermore, the agreement stipulated "the Soviet Union will come to the aid of its ally the PDRY, if it is exposed to foreign aggression."⁶⁶

The assassinations of the two Yemeni leaders earned South Yemen the condemnation of the Arab League. In an emergency session on July 2, the Arab League called for an economic and political boycott of South Yemen. Internally, Ismail's purges of Ali's followers met with stiff opposition. Many of Ali's supporters in the army and popular militia fled to North Yemen from whence they joined other exiled factions in launching sporadic attacks into the South. By late summer Ismail's regime was externally isolated and beset with internal conflict.

Amid reports of Ismail's continuing difficulties, the USSR dispatched three warships, under the command of Vice Admiral N.Y. Yasakov, to conduct a six-day port visit to Aden. The Soviet contingent included a submarine, a patrol vessel and a military transport ship. The presence of VADM Yasakov, Commander of the Indian Ocean Squadron, reflected

Moscow's concern for events in South Yemen. At one point during the port visit, which lasted from 19-24 August, VADM Yasakov participated in a closed door meeting with South Yemeni Prime Minister, Ali Nasir Mohammad, the Commander of the PDRY's naval forces and the Soviet Ambassador in Aden, Vladimir Koboshkin. In a related event, Ismail held discussions with the head of a Cuban Communist Party delegation visiting Aden during the same time period. On 22 August VADM Yasakov held a news conference during which he asserted "the strengthening of cooperation between the two countries serves the basic interests of our people". The Admiral also "confirmed his country's readiness to give more support to the Yemeni cadres..."⁶⁷ While this sophisticated and much publicized show of support, executed by a Soviet Admiral, certainly bolstered the South Yemeni government, it was probably the non-publicized arrival of 500 Cuban soldiers and their tanks, which disembarked from the transport ship and went directly to the North Yemeni border, that provided the most effective support to Ismail's embattled regime.⁶⁸

This act of naval diplomacy signified Moscow's intention to back the regime in South Yemen, with arms and troops if necessary, in order to protect its regional investment. The Soviet capability to deliver coupled with South Yemen's continuing instability resulted in the latter's decision to conclude a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR in October 1979.⁶⁹ For Moscow this long sought after treaty

was a significant foreign policy achievement, an achievement facilitated by an act of naval diplomacy.

F. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis various conclusions can be drawn concerning the naval element in Soviet strategy for the Red Sea Basin. In the years since the death of Stalin, the elements of Soviet sea power, the naval and civilian fleets, have experienced a tremendous increase in capability. As these capabilities grew an operational trend, away from traditional coastal employment, began to emerge. Gradually in the mid-1960's Soviet sea power shifted towards operations in the Third World arena. Within this arena the nations of the lower Red Sea basin, Ethiopia, Somalia, North and South Yemen, received specific attention. Elements of the Soviet civilian fleets, most notably the merchant and fishing fleets, often established the entree for Soviet influence in this region. The Soviet Navy followed as it protected the state interests developed by its civilian counterparts.

As Soviet seapower capabilities expanded, the Red Sea basin acquired heightened significance due to its strategic location within an outer defense zone of the USSR. In accordance with this warfighting concept, the Soviet Navy intends to establish sea control in the Red Sea Basin and the Northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean as a precondition to performing its wartime missions. In the event of hostilities with the West or China, operational and preferably strategic sea

control of this region looms as an essential element of a successful Soviet war strategy.

Establishing the conditions necessary for achieving sea control requires numerous measures to be executed while still at peace. These measures, inter alia, include the concentration of forces and the establishment of base facilities in selected maritime theaters. The Soviet Navy's continuous presence in the Indian Ocean and their quest for bases on both sides of Bab el Mandeb reflect a desire to establish these necessary conditions in the Red Sea basin and surrounding waters.

In fulfilling its peacetime missions the Russian Navy acts as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy. The Red Sea basin occupies a special position within the objectives of this foreign policy, and the navy is often tasked to perform naval diplomacy in support of regional state interests. On occasion, the mere presence of the Soviet Navy in the harbor or coastal waters of a target state has been sufficient to achieve the desired political outcome in a destabilizing situation. Gradually, however, the character of Soviet naval diplomacy has evolved from mere presence to active participation in regional conflict. As events off the coast of Eritrea in 1978 demonstrate, when the stakes are sufficiently high, the Soviet Navy will even deliver fire on the enemies of a favored client state.

The ill-fated Ashinov expedition of 1888 illustrates a persistent Russian desire to achieve a strategic foothold

in the Red Sea basin. Yet, only with the tremendous expansion of Soviet seapower in the post-Stalin era has this imperialist desire been matched by requisite capabilities. Accordingly, the increasing use of Soviet naval diplomacy to achieve foreign policy aims in this geostrategically significant region, poses no mystery. Indeed, the maturing Soviet Navy, operating in conjunction with the USSR's expanding civilian fleets, constitutes an essential element of the overall strategy for the Red Sea Basin. In the absence of credible opposition, as was the case in Ethiopia and South Yemen, these elements of Soviet sea power may assume decisive proportions.

In an attempt to portray the depth of involvement by the Soviet naval and maritime fleets, in the lower Red Sea basin, a special appendix has been added to this chapter. This data, covering the period from January 1977 to December 1979, reflects the linkage between increased naval and maritime activity and periods of instability and conflict in the lower Red Sea basin. While most of the emphasis in the foregoing analysis has focused on events in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Yemen, the data for 1979 indicates that North Yemen may now warrant a much closer look. The increased Soviet/Bloc naval and maritime activity with the YAR, coming at a time of heightened Western interest in this historically unstable nation suggests the emergence of a new arena in the competition for influence in the Red Sea basin. Presumably, North Yemen's strategy will be to pit Moscow against Washington

(and Riyadh) in an attempt to derive maximum benefit from both powers. Nevertheless, though ever cautious to avoid unnecessary exploitation, the United States should be prepared to compete with and, if necessary, oppose the elements of Soviet sea power in their attempts to implement Pax Sovietica in the Red Sea basin.

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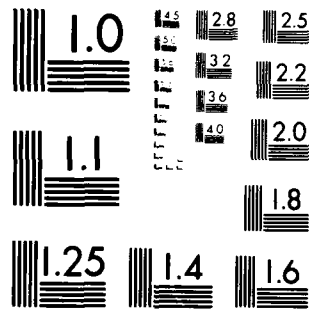
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NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

CHAPTER V FOOTNOTES

¹K.P. Pobedonostsev, Pisma i Zapiski (Letters and Notes), II (Moscow, 1923), p. 903, quoted in Edward T. Wilson, Russia and Black Africa Before World War II (New York: Holmes and Meir, 1974), p. 33.

²S.G. Gorshkov, Morskaya Moshch Gosudanstva (The Sea Power of the State), p. 292 of a privately-distributed translation, hereafter cited as Sea Power of the State. All future page citations are from this translation.

³James M. McConnell, "Doctrine and Capabilities", in Soviet Naval Diplomacy, ed. Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 14.

⁴Robert W. Herrick, Soviet Naval Strategy (Annapolis: United States Naval Institute, 1968), p. 63.

⁵N.S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, trans. Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1974), p. 31. Hereafter cited as Khrushchev Remembers.

⁶U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce and National Ocean Policy Study, Soviet Oceans Development, Committee Print 94th Cong. 2nd Sess., (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 83.

⁷Sea Power of the State, p. 16. Quotations added. In fairness to Khrushchev one must add that he did not entirely dismiss the political utility of surface ships. In his memoirs, Khrushchev notes, "As a concession (to the Navy), I suggested that perhaps we should have a few high-class modern cruisers for purposes of calling on foreign ports." Apparently this concession led to the construction of the four KYNDA class rocket cruisers. See Khrushchev Remembers, pp. 32-33.

⁸Sea Power of the State, p. 1.

⁹U.S. Department of Commerce, Maritime Administration, A Statistical Analysis of the World's Merchant Fleets, 1977, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1979), Vessels of 1000 or more Gross Registered Tons (GRT).

- ¹⁰Soviet Oceans Development , p. 81.
- ¹¹Lloyd's Register of Shipping Statistical Tables
1978 (London: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1978), pp. 62-63.
- ¹²Richard T. Ackley, "The Fishing Fleet and Soviet Strategy", U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings 101 (July 1975): 31.
- ¹³Lloyd's Register of Shipping Statistical Tables 1978, p. 13.
- ¹⁴V.D. Yakovlev, "Sovetskii Flot", (The Soviet Navy). DOSAAF, Moscow, 1969: Joint Publication Research Service (JPRS), n. 692, 1971, pp. 27, 29, 30, quoted in Ibid., p. 279.
- ¹⁵Ackley, p. 38.
- ¹⁶Michael D. Davidchik and Robert B. Mahoney, Jr., "Soviet Civil Fleets and the Third World," in Dismukes and McConnell, op. cit., p. 328.
- ¹⁷The port of Hodeida was completed in 1961 under the reign of Imam Ahmad, one year before the Yemeni revolution. The Somali port of Berbera was opened in January 1969, eight months prior to the assassination of President Shermarke. See Charles B. McLane, Soviet-Third World Relations, vol. 1: Soviet-Middle East Relations (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1973), p. 113 and Vol. 3: Soviet-African Relations (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1974), p. 129.
- ¹⁸McLane, Soviet-African Relations, p. 131.
- ¹⁹Seewirtschaft (West Germany), n. 1, 1979, p. 51 cited in Navscan 7 (March 15, 1979), p. 8.
- ²⁰Charles C. Petersen, "Trends in Soviet Naval Operations," in Dismukes and McConnell, op. cit., p. 71; McLane, Soviet-African Relations, p. 125.
- ²¹Marine Rundschau (West Germany), n. 1, 1979, p. 55, cited in Navscan 7 (March 1, 1979), p. 11; Marine Rundschau (West Germany), n. 3, 1979, p. 205, cited in Navscan 7 (May 1, 1979), p. 10.

²²U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Indian Ocean Atlas (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 6.

²³Sea Power of the State, p. vi.

²⁴Paul J. Murphy, "Trends in Soviet Naval Force Structure," in Naval Power in Soviet Policy, ed. Paul J. Murphy (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 127.

²⁵Anne M. Kelly, "Port Visits and the 'Internationalist Mission' of the Soviet Navy", research paper reproduced by Center For Naval Analysis (CNA) under the CNA Professional Development Program, Arlington, Virginia, p. 7.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 8. Miss Kelly lists two additional port visit categories: friendly unofficial or courtesy visits and the special operation visit. The courtesy visit resembles the diplomatic visit, but is much more low key. Special operation visits are crisis related and designed to support a specific diplomatic initiative.

²⁷Petersen, p. 82; Defense Nationale (French), June 1977, pp. 168-170 cited in Navscan 5 (September 1, 1977).

²⁸Herrick, pp. 74, 110, 113; Michael MccGwire, "Naval Power and Soviet Global Strategy, International Security 3 (Spring 1979): 164.

²⁹Sea Power of the State, p. 294.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 295.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 296.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 295

³³MccGwire, p. 165.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 172.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 174.

³⁶Sea Power of the State, p. 297.

³⁷Donald C. Daniel, "Navy," in Soviet Armed Forces Review Annual 1977, ed. David R. Jones (Gulf Breeze, Fl.: Academic International Press, 1978), pp. 167-182.

³⁸TASS (in English), 8 February 1978, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Hereafter appearing as FBIS) Soviet Union, 9 February 1978, p. H-1.

³⁹McLane, Soviet African Relations, p. 45. It is conceivable that Gorshkov's visit was aimed at acquiring base facilities at Ethiopia's Red Sea ports of Assab and Massawa. In this regard, the Soviet built refinery at Assab, completed in 1965, would be quite useful to the Soviet Navy. The search for bases in Ethiopia becomes more plausible considering the Russian historical legacy with this nation and the fact that the Soviet Navy had not yet acquired facilities in Somalia or the British Protectorate of Aden.

⁴⁰Dismukes and McConnell, p. xiii.

⁴¹S.G. Gorshkov, The Navy (Moscow: Vayenno-Morskoy Flot, 1977), appearing in JPRS, n. 72286, 28 November 1978, pp. 43-44.

⁴²McLane, Soviet-African Relations, pp. 126-129.

⁴³Abram N. Shulsky, ed., "Coercive Diplomacy", in Dismukes and McConnell, op. cit., p. 128.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Colin Legum and Bill Lee, The Horn of Africa in Continuing Crisis (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1979), p. 51.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 50; Washington Post, 5 March 1978, p. A-10.

⁴⁷Addis Ababa Domestic Service (in English), 30 December 1976, appearing in FBIS-Sub-Saharan Africa, 3 January 1977, p. B-1.

⁴⁸Soldat und Technik (West Germany), n. 7, 1977, p. 389, cited in Navscan 5 (September 15, 1977), p. 24.

⁴⁹Washington Post, 5 March 1978, p. A-10; The Guardian, 5 June 1977, p. 15.

- ⁵⁰New York Times, 25 February 1978, p. 5; Washington Post, 5 March 1978, p. A-10.
- ⁵¹Daily Telegraph (London), 21 January 1978.
- ⁵²Newsweek, 13 February 1978, p. 45; New York Times, 8 February 1978.
- ⁵³Daily Telegraph (London), 21 January 1978.
- ⁵⁴Ibid.; The Sunday Times (London), 12 February 1978, p. 9.
- ⁵⁵Daily Telegraph (London), 23 February 1978.
- ⁵⁶International Herald Tribune (Paris), 19 June 1978, p. 4.
- ⁵⁷Strategic Survey 1978 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), pp. 13-14.
- ⁵⁸Wall Street Journal, 1 March 1978, p. 18; Hansa (West Germany), n. 3, 1978, p. 223, cited in Navscan 6 (April, 1978), p. 10.
- ⁵⁹Daily Telegraph (London), 21 January 1978; The Guardian, 29 January 1978.
- ⁶⁰The Guardian, 29 January 1978.
- ⁶¹Legum and Lee, p. 15. General Petrov, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of all Soviet Ground Forces, was ably assisted by the former head of the Soviet military aid program to Somalia, General Grigory Barisov. The senior Cuban officer in Ethiopia was General Arnaldo Ochoa, a veteran of the Angolan civil war.
- ⁶²Arab Report and Record, 1-15 September 1978, p. 654; Colin Legum, ed., Middle East Contemporary Survey (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1979), p. 660.
- ⁶³McLane, Soviet-Middle East Relations, pp. 88-89.
- ⁶⁴For the most concise compilation of this evidence see Nimrod Novik, On the Shores of Bab el Mandeb, Monograph n. 26 (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1979), p. 17.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ David Lynn Price, "Moscow and the Persian Gulf," Problems of Communism 28 (March-April 1979): 10; Novik, p. 19; Legum, Middle East Contemporary Survey, p. 666.

⁶⁷ Krasnaya Zvezda, (USSR), 16 August 1978, p. 3 cited in Navscan 6 (September 15, 1978), p. 3; Aden Domestic Service (in Arabic), 21 August 1978; appearing in FBIS-Middle East-Africa, 22 August 1978, p. C-4; Aden Domestic Service (in Arabic), 22 August 1978, appearing in FBIS-Middle East-Africa, 23 August 1978, p. C-3.

⁶⁸ Arab Report and Record, 16-31 August 1978, p. 609; Amman AR-RA'Y (in Arabic), 20 August 1978, p. 1, appearing in FBIS-Middle East-Africa, 21 August 1978, p. C-3.

⁶⁹ Pravda (Moscow), 27 October 1979, p. 1, appearing in FBIS-Soviet Union, 30 October 1979, pp. H1-H5.

TABLE 5.1

Comparative Strengths of Soviet and American Navies

TYPE	1957/1958		1967/1968		1978/1979	
	USSR	USA	USSR	USA	USSR	USA
Subs	475	204	400	207	352	117
Major Combatant	513	948	240	773	271	198
Amphibious	120	562	200	187	96	66
Patrol	125	109	100	35	120	8
Coastal Patrol	500	-	650	274	445	-
Mine Warfare	1000	317	350	146	405	25
Auxiliary	160	550	104	238	740	104
Total	2893	2890	2044	1860	2429	518

Data extracted from Jane's Fighting Ships and Donald C. Daniel, Notes on Trends and Patterns in Soviet Naval Hardware Developments, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Ca., 1979. All numbers approximate.

TABLE 5.2

Expansion of Soviet Merchant Fleet 1959-1976

YEAR	DWT (000)	% increase	# units ^a	% increase
1959	3.3	-	590	-
1960	4.9	48	873	48
1965	8.0	63	990	13
1970	11.9	49	1400	41
1975	15.3	29	1600	19
1976	16.5	7	1709	3

Data from Soviet Shipping Expansion Since 1972, ER-RP-74-18, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C., p. 2; and Research Aid: Handbook of Economic Statistics-1977, ER-771053, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C., p. 152. All numbers approximate.

^aShips of 1,000 DWT or more. Excludes passenger ships that have small cargo capacity.

TABLE 5.3
Expansion of Soviet Fishing Fleet

YEAR	UNITS	GRT (000)	TOTAL CATCH (000 METRIC TONS)
1955	1379	734	2495
1960	2588	1760	3051
1965	3373	3301	5100
1970	4165	5194	7252
1975	4363	6600	9876

Data on number of units and GRT from Michael D. Davidchik and Robert B. Mahoney "Soviet Civil Fleets and the Third World," in Soviet Naval Diplomacy, ed. Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 324. Data on total catch from U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Commerce and National Ocean Policy Study, Soviet Oceans Development, Committee Print, 94th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 397 and United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, Yearbook of Fishery Statistics, 1975, vol. 40 (Rome: FAO, 1976), p. 313.

TABLE 5.4

Combination Soviet Aid and Joint Fishing Ventures with
LDC's (1964-1976)

<u>AFRICA</u>	<u>MIDDLE EAST</u>	<u>ASIA</u>
Angola	Iraq	Sri Lanka
Benin	South Yemen	
Egypt		
Ghana		
Guinea-Bissau		
Mauritania		
Maurituis		
Morocco		
Mozambique		
Sierra Leone		
Tunisia		

Data from Michael D. Davidchik and Robert B. Mahoney,
"Soviet Civil Fleets and the Third World," in Soviet Naval
Diplomacy, ed. Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell (New
York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 328-329.

TABLE 5.5

Estimated Annual Soviet Merchant Ship Visits to Third World States

<u>Nation</u>	<u>1967-1970 (Average)</u>	<u>1971-1974 (Average)</u>
Cuba	1250	1600
Egypt	600	1100
India	350	400
Greece	300	400
Lebanon	200	200
North Vietnam	250	250
Syria	200	300
Turkey	200	250
Singapore	250	400
Cyprus	100	100
Algeria	200	300
South Yemen	100	-
Morocco	150	200
Spain	200	350
North Korea	100	150
Libya	100	150
Iraq	-	200
Malaysia	-	200
Brazil	-	150
Tunisia	-	150
Sum	4550	6850
Other calls to Third World States	1500	1500
Sum as % of Total	75%	82%

Table extracted from Michael D. Davidchik and Robert B. Mahoney, "Soviet Civil Fleets and the Third World," in Soviet Naval Diplomacy, ed. Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 320.

TABLE 5.6

Diplomatic and Operational Port Visits
By Soviet Naval Units 1967-1976

TYPE	TOTAL NUMBER	DCs ^a		LDCs ^b		Red Sea basin ^c	
		#	% TOTAL	#	% TOTAL	#	% TOTAL
Diplomatic	170	30	18	140	82	27	16
Operational	3372	144	4	3228	96	427	13
Total	3542	174	5	3368	95	454	13

Figures compiled from data presented in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, ed., Soviet Naval Diplomacy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), pp. 68-69, 88-89.

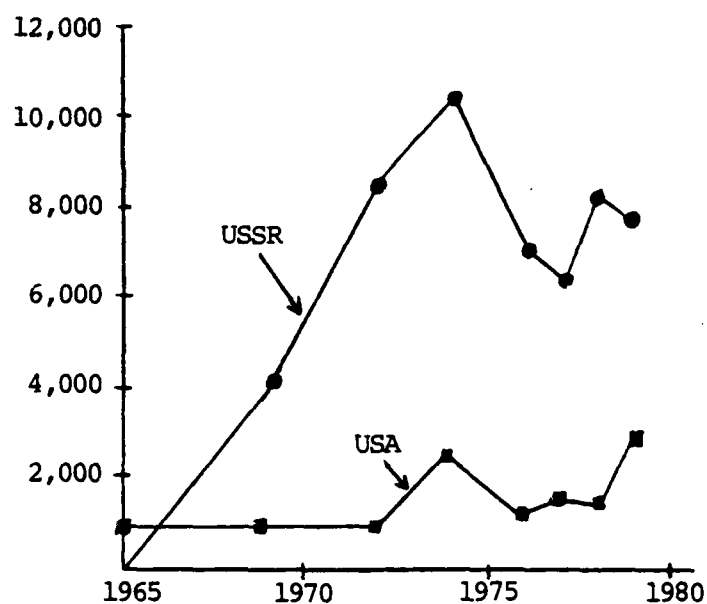
^aDC equals Developed Countries.

^bLDC equals Less Developed Countries.

^cRed Sea Basin includes Ethiopia, Somalia, North and South Yemen.

FIGURE 5.1

Soviet Navy Ship Days in the Indian Ocean 1965-1979



<u>Year</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>USA</u>
1965	-	1,100
1969	4,200	1,100
1972	8,800	1,100
1974	10,500	2,600
1976	7,300	1,400
1977	7,050	1,761
1978	8,450	1,703
1979	7,550	3,207

Figures 1965-1976 from Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Understanding Soviet Naval Developments (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Navy, 1978), p. 14. Figures for 1977-1979 from CNO (OP 906 D1) memorandum, ser 906 D1/186842, dtd 19 December 1979, and Director, Naval Ocean Surveillance Information Center ltr ser NOSIC-212/025 dtd 7 February 1980.

TABLE 5.7

Soviet Indian Ocean Naval/Naval Associated
Ship Days
1977-1979

Ship Type	1977	1978	1979	TOTAL
SS/SSG	400	450	300	1150
SSN/SSGN	150	0	150	300
MAJOR COMBATANTS	1400	1450	1800	4650
MINOR COMBATANTS	1050	1550	900	3500
AUXILIARIES	3500	4150	3400	11050
AGI	100	150	300	550
NAVAL ASSOCIATED MERCHANTS	450	700	700	1850
TOTALS	7050	8450	7550	23050

There have been no known deployments by bloc naval units
to the Indian Ocean.

Data provided by Director, Naval Ocean Surveillance
Information Center ltr ser NOSIC-212/025 dtd 7 February
1980.

G. SPECIAL APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

APPENDIX ONE - Table A.1

SOVIET RED SEA NAVAL/NAVAL ASSOCIATED PORT VISITS,
1977-1979

COUNTRY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
<u>DJIBOUTI</u>													
1977	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1978	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1979	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>ETHIOPIA</u>													
1977	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
1978	7	4	6	13	11	10	6	6	8	4	6	6	87
1979	6	12	12	9	7	7	6	9	5	7	5	4	89
<u>NORTH YEMEN (YAR)</u>													
1977	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
1978	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
1979	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	4
<u>SOMALIA</u>													
1977	11	11	11	12	10	12	4	7	2	4	7	0	91
1978	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1979	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>SOUTH YEMEN (PDRY)</u>													
1977	0	1	2	3	1	2	1	3	8	8	6	8	44
1978	8	13	10	10	8	9	6	8	9	9	7	4	100
1979	5	4	6	5	11	9	3	7	2	6	4	5	67
<u>TOTAL ALL PORTS</u>													
1977	139												
1978	189												
1979	160												

The port visit figures listed above represent the number of Soviet units present in each country during the month noted, including permanent/semi-permanent presence. Data provided by Director, Naval Ocean Surveillance Center ltr ser NOSIC-212/025 dtd 7 February 1980.

APPENDIX ONE - Table A.2

SOVIET, BLOC AND CUBAN RED SEA MERCHANT SHIP PORT CALLS,
1977-1979

COUNTRY	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
<u>DJIBOUTI</u>													
1977	1	3	1	1	1	6	1	0	1	2	1	1	19
1978	3	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	3	4	1	7	32
1979	4	4	4	1	1	4	3	3	6	9	3	0	42
<u>ETHIOPIA</u>													
1977	4	3	8	2	5	9	10	7	12	14	7	9	90
1978	22	16	19	9	7	5	12	7	7	6	6	3	119
1979	8	5	8	4	11	3	10	4	7	9	7	10	86
<u>NORTH YEMEN (YAR)</u>													
1977	12	28	22	20	25	28	29	17	29	9	30	27	276
1978	34	22	28	19	19	16	20	21	15	14	11	18	237
1979	26	20	33	18	28	21	23	23	23	30	19	26	286
<u>SOMALIA</u>													
1977	16	6	6	12	5	10	14	4	7	6	6	2	94
1978	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	8
1979	0	0	3	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	11
<u>SOUTH YEMEN (PDRY)</u>													
1977	3	0	3	5	2	6	2	4	1	2	1	4	33
1978	2	1	1	5	3	2	0	2	3	1	1	2	23
1979	3	4	7	5	5	6	5	3	5	7	1	2	53
<u>TOTAL ALL PORTS</u>													
1977	512												
1978	419												
1979	480												

Data provided by Director Naval Ocean Surveillance Center ltr ser NOSIC-212/025
dtd 7 February 1980.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In drawing conclusions I am reminded of George Bernard Shaw's rationale for the popularity of marriage, "It combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity."¹ For the Soviet Union, the Red Sea basin acquires a similar popularity. When viewed in the context of pursuing their strategic incentives, a strong Soviet presence in this geostrategically significant region is not only tempting, but also essential. Concurrently, the intractable linkages derived from ethnic, cultural, religious, political, economic and primordial origins crosscut vertical and horizontal social strata and permeate territorial boundaries to produce patterns of incessant instability, or targets of opportunity, within the Red Sea basin. The pattern of Soviet strategy that emerges, within this volatile arena, indicates not a grand design, with a rigid game-plan and a specific timetable, but rather an attempt to selectively exploit targets of opportunity in pursuit of national interests. The foregoing analysis of research data supports this basic hypothesis. Further, the analysis suggests that if Moscow were following a grand design in the Red Sea basin, it has not been highly successful. In the wake of failures in Egypt, Sudan and Somalia, and a very questionable position in North Yemen, only South Yemen and Ethiopia can be counted as Soviet clients.

Of these, only the PDRY has established a vanguard party and taken steps to fully institutionalize their revolution. Ethiopia's current strongman, Mengistu Haile Mariam, has consistently fought the formulation of a mass party, and very begrudgingly, has authorized the convening of a government commission to study the idea.² Mengistu's support for Moscow stems from his need for external military assistance to combat the multitude of opposition/ liberation movements actively resisting his repressive and inhuman policies. This same resistance prevents the USSR from reaping the strategic benefits of their presence in Ethiopia. Additionally, the Soviet Union is paying quite dearly for its Abyssinian gambit and Mengistu's hard line stance on Eritrea does not make the burden any lighter. Accordingly, Kremlin leaders may decide either to replace Mengistu or lessen their military commitment to the embattled country. Either option may result in yet another Soviet expulsion at the hands of a leader who is more nationalist than Marxist-Leninist. Moreover, it is difficult to conceive of a Russian grand design that would consciously plan for the volte-face presented to previous allies in Somalia and Eritrea and for a defacto USSR-Israeli alliance in favor of Ethiopia, when support for the Arab cause against "Zionist aggression" is a major Soviet propaganda theme and the overwhelming majority of Arab nations stand behind Eritrea.

The absence of a grand strategy does not mean that the USSR does not possess very definite objectives for the Red Sea basin. These goals do exist and may be viewed on three planes: political, economic and military. Politically, the Soviet Union seeks to diminish United States influence in the Red Sea basin. Accordingly they will seize the opportunity to exploit American misfortunes in the region. For example, Moscow moved quickly, in late 1976, early 1977, to capitalize on deteriorating relations between Washington and Addis Ababa over the latter's dismal human rights record. The same political goal applies to China. Diminishing Chinese influence in South Yemen was an essential factor behind the Soviet decision to support Abdel Fattah Ismail over his pro-Peking rival, Salim Robaye Ali.

Economically, the USSR desires to enhance its trade relationship with Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. As Anatoly Gromyko, director of the USSR's Africa Institute has noted: "Soviet trade with African countries is being expanded on a mutually advantageous basis. From 1960 to 1975, it has multiplied nearly 5.3 fold."³ The mutually advantageous nature of Soviet-African trade is reflected in its export/import character:

the Soviet Union has been increasing its purchases in Africa of raw materials and consumer goods...One of the main features of Soviet export to the African countries is that machinery and equipment are the leading items.⁴

In essence, Africa provides markets for the heavy industry products which the Soviet defense oriented economy generates in abundance. Moreover, by importing Africa's relatively inexpensive consumer goods or tying them to barter deals, the USSR alleviates the necessity of expending hard currency on expensive Western consumer goods or diverting its own resources into light industry. A similar arrangement applies to the importation of African raw materials which fill short falls in the USSR's natural endowment and extraction capability. With respect to the Arabian Peninsula the key resource is oil. Soviet leaders now openly admit that the USSR faces an energy crisis of its own in the 1980s. Instead of scorning Western predictions of a Soviet energy crunch, the Kremlin now speaks of its "well-known shortage of oil and coal" and calls for the "strictest economy measures."⁵ Accordingly, access to the substantial oil reserves of the Arabian Peninsula looms as an important economic objective of Soviet strategy for the Red Sea basin.

Militarily, the Soviet Union seeks to achieve operational and, if possible, strategic control of the Red Sea basin. This objective stems from the area's location within an outer defense zone of the USSR and its function as an all-weather maritime conduit between Russia's East and West. In the event of war with China, operational control of the Red Sea basin looms as a vital precondition to the transshipment of troops and supplies to the Far Eastern front.

Should the Soviet foe be located in the West, operational control in this northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean will enhance the USSR's capability to sever the enemy's oil lifeline with the Persian Gulf.

The maturing Soviet Navy plays a prominent role in the achievement of this military objective. With the tremendous expansion of Soviet sea power, in the post-Stalin era, persistent Tsarist and Soviet interest in the Red Sea basin finally is matched by requisite capabilities. In the event of hostilities with China or the West the Soviet Navy will strive to achieve operational sea control, for specific missions, both north and south of Bab el Nandeb. If conditions permit, the Soviet Navy will be tasked with establishing strategic sea control in this maritime theater for the duration of the conflict. In order for the Soviet Navy to gain sea control certain "measures" must be executed "while still at peace." The growing presence of Soviet naval vessels in the Indian Ocean and attempts by Moscow to obtain naval and communications facilities from the nations of the Red Sea basin comprise the essence of these peacetime measures.

Apart from these wartime functions, the Soviet Navy also conducts naval diplomacy in pursuit of Soviet foreign policy objectives in the Red Sea basin. Oftentimes the mere presence of Soviet naval vessels and the latent threat implied by their presence are sufficient to achieve the

desired political outcome. In other cases, such as the conflict in the Horn of Africa during 1977 and 1978, the Soviet Navy has taken an active military role in support of a regional client. The expanding capabilities of Russia's civilian fleets complement the navy in the implementation of the USSR's foreign policy objectives in the Red Sea basin. Together, these elements of Soviet sea power comprise essential, and at times, decisive, elements of Moscow's strategy for the Red Sea basin.

Of all the tools at the Kremlin's disposal, their military assistance program appears to be the most effective vehicle for exploiting targets of opportunity in the Red Sea basin. This program thrives on the positive interaction of regional demand factors and Soviet supply incentives. The patterns of instability, endemic to the Red Sea basin, tend to intensify regional demand factors, such as authoritarian governments and intractable conflicts. Meanwhile, the USSR's foreign policy objectives for providing military assistance generally are reinforced by the Soviet organizational and bureaucratic environment. The net result is a flourishing agendum of arms transfers, adviser training and scholarship exchanges with the nations of the Red Sea basin.

The availability of racially acceptable Cuban proxies to fill adviser billets and operate sophisticated military equipment facilities the implementation of this program.

The Soviet Union also utilizes East German advisers whose efficiency in internal security and intelligence operations is welcomed by the region's authoritarian regimes which generally lack wide public support. Through its in-country adviser and military scholarship program, Moscow is able to develop personal relationships with indigenous military elite. These personal relationships provide a valuable intelligence source and may be used to advance pro-Soviet factions within the government. Combining these personal relationships with the availability of Soviet arms and the presence of Russian, Cuban and East German advisers enables the USSR to seize the initiative in any number of destabilizing scenarios it chooses to exploit.

In a region plagued with conflict, external military assistance is a readily available export. Accordingly, throughout the Red Sea basin Soviet military assistance becomes the primary vehicle with which to exploit targets of opportunity. However, if regional conflict subsides and the need for military assistance abates, the USSR's inability to provide for viable economic development will be unmasked. Such was the case with Egypt after the 1973 war. Unfortunately, the patterns of instability existing in the Red Sea basin do not augur for an imminent era of peace and prosperity. Accordingly, Soviet military assistance is likely to remain the most proficient vehicle for exploiting targets of opportunity in this inherently unstable region.

To assert that each destabilizing event within the area is pursued by Moscow, or that the USSR has gained, across the board, from its exploitation of this instability would be overly simplistic. While the Soviet Union has achieved significant gains by exploiting destabilizing events within the Red Sea basin, the patterns of instability persist throughout the region virtually unabated by Moscow's presence. Accordingly, the very instability which has provided the opportunity for gain also can become the instrument of failure.

In recognition of this fact, Moscow has sought to establish a confederation of "progressive states" within the Red Sea basin. Such a confederation would transcend the patterns of instability, containing the effects of destabilizing events within a supranational barrier impenetrable to the outside world. In theory, this mechanism resembles the British system of indirect rule utilized effectively during the era of imperial sovereignty in Aden and Somaliland. Under this system Great Britain protected its territories from external intervention while local chieftans were permitted to solve internal problems by traditional methods. In practice the Soviet mechanism is quite different. In many ways it comprises a projection of the framework utilized within the USSR. Within this Soviet sponsored confederation borders would represent cultural vice sovereign territorial boundaries. Marxism-Leninism would become the dominant ideology and overall

unifying force. Vanguard parties would be formulated in each state with party chairman assuming the role of head of state. The confederation would be administered by large homogeneous bureaucracies, in each country, with similarly large security/intelligence departments ensuring that all opposition is stifled. As in the British system, the USSR would protect its client states from external aggression. Presumably, the Soviet Union also would task itself with the responsibility to protect socialist gains within each state. As the cases of Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan demonstrate, this protection would be embodied in the Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation concluded with each state. The USSR currently maintains Friendship treaties with Ethiopia and South Yemen.⁶

Siad Barre's abrogation of the Somali-Soviet Friendship Treaty in 1977 served as a setback to the Kremlin's plans for a confederation, and shifted the focus to the Arabian peninsula. On this side of the "Gate of Tears" a union between North and South Yemen would be considered a progressive step. Accordingly, Moscow can be expected to support plans for a unified Yemen, which, most assuredly, would be dominated by the strong and well-organized UPONF headed by Abdel Fattah Ismail. Under these conditions a unified Yemen would pose a serious threat to Saudi Arabia, and may force Riyadh to seek separate political and economic accommodations with Moscow in the interest of their own self-preservation.

Whether or not a Soviet inspired confederation in the Red Sea basin will work remains speculative. On the negative side, history is against such a union. Previous attempts by solely Arab states to form federal unions, such as the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria in 1958), the Arab Union (Iraq and Jordan in 1958), the United Arab States (Egypt, Syria and Yemen in 1959), and the Union of Arab Republics (Egypt, Syria and Libya in 1971), all failed miserably. With such a history, the chances for a successful union of non-contiguous, Arab and African nations appear rather poor. On the other hand a confederation of Red Sea states administered by strong bureaucracies and backed by Soviet military power may indeed survive. Chances for survival are especially good, if calls for assistance from the nationalistic and fiercely independent people of the Red Sea basin fall on deaf ears in the West.

This brings us round to the subject of U.S. policy for the Red Sea basin. At present, policy options for Ethiopia and Somalia appear to be conceived from a purely African perspective. Similarly, guidance for the Yemens is formulated as part of an overall Middle East policy. These separate perspectives, though not totally inappropriate, fail to recognize the very real cultural, historical, economic and religious linkages which span the breadth of Bab el Mandeb.

Currently, Washington favors a wait and see policy for the Horn of Africa. This policy is based on the assumption

that the Eritrean and Ogaden conflicts eventually will subside and the need for Soviet military assistance will no longer exist. At this point Mengistu, recognizing the inadequacies of Soviet economic assistance, will turn to the West and expel his Russian benefactors. Inasmuch as American support for opposition groups in Ethiopia and Somalia would delay Mengistu's transformation, it is not provided.

This policy is unrealistic for it assumes that Moscow has not learned from previous mistakes. It is naive to expect that Moscow will graciously accept expulsion from Ethiopia at the hands of still another nationalist leader. Accordingly, the Soviet Union is pressing for the establishment of a vanguard party, in Ethiopia, as a means of institutionalizing and permanentizing their presence in the Horn of Africa. Under these circumstances, if the need for external military assistance subsides, the framework for replacing Mengistu with a pro-Soviet leader will exist. Further, the conflicts in Eritrea and the Ogaden are not likely to abate in the near term. Indeed, they are aggravated by Mengistu's refusal to adopt a more conciliatory stance to these problems. In view of the heavy costs of these intractable conflicts, to Moscow and its proxies, Kremlin leaders may decide to replace Mengistu, by institutional means, with a more ideologically committed leader who is willing to negotiate a settlement in the disputed

areas. The likely outcome of this settlement could place Marxist-Leninist leaders in Eritrea (EPLF) and Ethiopia; thus, further enhancing Moscow's position in the Horn of Africa. Meanwhile, the repression which has forced more than 750,000 refugees to flee Ethiopia would continue with the passive compliance of the West.⁷

Western economic aid flowing into Ethiopia constitutes a more active, though perhaps unintentioned, acceptance of Mengistu's sub-human policies. Under the provisions of the Lomé Agreement regarding population and GNP, Ethiopia qualifies for and receives the lion's share of EEC aid designated for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.⁸ Western economic aid combined with Soviet military assistance gives Mengistu the best of both worlds and provides no incentive for the Dergue leader to adopt less oppressive domestic policies.

In the Yemen U.S. policy appears to follow the Saudi lead. The gradual thaw in Saudi-South Yemen relations nurtured during the later phase of President Ali's tenure, led to the aborted U.S. State Department mission in June 1978. Similarly, in North Yemen, the U.S. responded to Saudi concerns by moving from a hands-off policy to one of supplying roughly \$400 million in military aid during 1979. This linkage between Saudi and American foreign policy for the Yemen is inevitable as long as the United States remains heavily dependent on Persian Gulf oil. Washington could

hardly expect Riyadh to provide preferential treatment on oil matters and political issues, such as the Camp David settlement, without acceding to Saudi Arabia's legitimate national security concerns vis-a-vis the Yemen. The linkage is not necessarily detrimental for in the majority of issues U.S. and Saudi interests are coincident. Nevertheless, by appearing hesitant until sparked into action by Riyadh, Washington's image suffers on two accounts. First, in a region where decisiveness is a valued trait, America appears indecisive and reluctant to act. Secondly, when finally prodded into action Washington tends to overreact as in the case of the arms shipments to North Yemen. Overaction coupled with on again/off again carrier deployments embarrasses regional nations and generates an image of unpredictability in Washington.

An additional drawback stems from depending too heavily on Saudi financing. If the United States feels that North Yemen requires arms to improve its national security, then it should be prepared to provide these arms without Saudi financing. Linking the payment of these arms to Saudi dollars enables Riyadh to suspend deliveries when it deems North Yemen sufficiently strong. When Saudi Arabia did this in 1979, North Yemen, predictably, turned to Moscow for military assistance.⁹ This is not to say that Saudi financing, to facilitate U.S. policy, is not welcome. The point is that this financing should not be a precondition

to the implementation of a policy deemed to be in the interests of American national security.

In formulating U.S. policy for the Red Sea basin, at least four basic factors must be taken into consideration. First, future policy must be viewed in terms of the common Afro-Arab heritage which links both shores of Bab el Mandeb. It must not be viewed merely as tangential elements of overall policies for the Middle East and Africa. Secondly, Moscow's ability to successfully exploit targets of opportunity in the Red Sea basin depends, in a large measure, on the degree of response emanating from the West. Soviet gains in this region have been achieved in the absence of any meaningful opposition. Thirdly, the United States must be willing to use military force in support of its interests. While recognizing that there is no meaningful alternative to detente, we also must recognize that detente functions best when backed up by military muscle, not only in strategic capabilities, but also in strong and properly used conventional forces. Finally, there is a moral element. Future U.S. policy must consider the responsibility to defend the democratic ethic upon which our political system is based. It is morally irresponsible for the U.S. and the Western world to passively accept the forceful establishment, within the Red Sea basin, of authoritarian regimes whose externally supported repression borders on totalitarianism. In this regard, total non-intervention

in order to preserve the status-quo, regardless of how achieved, is entirely unrealistic.

With these factors in mind the following prescriptions are cautiously proffered. The United States should embark on a prolonged political and economic offensive in the Red Sea basin. Economically, American business representatives should be encouraged to openly compete for access to indigenous markets and investment in infant industry development programs. A government sponsored Economic Development Assistance Team (EDAT) would serve as the vehicle for this initiative. The EDAT teams headed by a senior cabinet official, and comprised of prominent American businessmen, would participate in bilaterally sponsored trade and development conferences held, where possible, in the nations of the Red Sea basin. Private business actions should be backed up by trade liberalization policies to ensure markets for foreign goods. The goal for American business should not be to own the foreign industry but to assist in the viable development of domestically owned enterprises.

Politically, the United States should openly support national democratic organizations in opposition to externally supported regional authoritarian regimes. Typical organizations deserving of this support are the Ethiopian Democratic Union and the Eritrean Liberation Front, in Ethiopia, and the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen in the PDRY.

No active military involvement by U.S. personnel is envisaged by this policy. However, military equipment channeled through Egypt, Sudan and Saudi Arabia should be provided. Saudi financing for this military equipment is encouraged, but must not be a precondition to policy implementation.

Currently, the United States does not have the naval assets to create a fifth fleet or otherwise substantially increase its Indian Ocean force level without drastically altering its worldwide commitment schedule. Accordingly, in the near term, U.S. naval presence should be maintained at a moderate level with an operational schedule designed to achieve the maximum political and economic impact per unit assigned. Naval diplomacy by means of port visits on national holidays, community assistance projects and bilateral naval exercises should be encouraged and highly publicized.

The foregoing policy envisions a peaceful engagement with the Soviet Union on terms most favorable to the United States. Primary armaments for this encounter are the by-products of the political and economic strengths characteristic of the Western world: technology, industry and business entrepreneurship. The Soviet Union cannot compete on this plane. Nor, can the USSR or its proxies long sustain costly Vietnam-type military operations in the Ogaden, Eritrea and the Yemens. Currently, the inadequacies

of Soviet economic aid are masked by the military arms provided to regional clients. The possibility of a protracted struggle balanced by an American offer of viable economic development may influence regional authoritarian regimes to seek negotiated settlements with national democratic movements while loosening their ties with the Soviet Union.

Events in Iran and Afghanistan notwithstanding, the importance of the Red Sea basin cannot be overstated. It is highly unlikely that the USSR will march across Iran and strike at the oil fields of the Persian Gulf. Such folly would precipitate war with the West, after which the oil fields would be of no use to anybody. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan resulted from reasons quite apart from a desire for Persian Gulf oil. Moscow does desire access to and a measure of control over Persian Gulf oil. Yet, the path to this oil is not through Afghanistan, but rather through the Yemen. With Soviet support, South Yemen is capable of launching destabilizing operations deep into Saudi Arabia and Oman. To deflect the pressure from these operations Riyadh and Muscat may be forced to conclude separate accommodations with Moscow. Such accommodations could give the USSR the same degree of access and control over Persian Gulf oil, though in a more subtle and less belicose way than marching through Iran.

CHAPTER VI FOOTNOTES

¹George Bernard Shaw, "Maxims for Revolutionists," quoted in Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (London: Oxford University Press, 1953; reprint ed. 1966), p. 490.

²According to a former Ethiopian government official, Mengistu will continue to drag his feet on the establishment of a vanguard party. In the estimation of this official, Mengistu's procrastination stems from the fear that institutionalization of the revolution will diminish his power. Under the current setup, even though the Dergue may discuss various issues, Mengistu makes all decisions. Under the system proposed by Moscow, Mengistu realizes "he can't be a dictator," and thus will delay as long as possible.

³Anatoly Gromyko, "The October Revolution and Africa's Destiny," International Affairs n. 9 (September 1977): 101.

⁴A. Skorodumov, "Soviet-African Trade," International Affairs n. 5 (May 1977): 188.

⁵Pravda (Moscow), 12 November 1979, quoted in Daily Telegraph (London), 13 November 1979.

⁶Article 2 of the Soviet treaties with Ethiopia and South Yemen is identical and reads

The high contracting parties will cooperate closely in every way to ensure the conditions for preserving and further developing their people's socioeconomic gains.

See FBIS Middle East and North Africa, 29 October 1979, p. H-2 and FBIS Sub-Saharan Africa, 21 November 1978, p. H-6. Though not as strong, this wording resembles that contained in the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of 1970, and provides sufficient leeway for Moscow to lend "fraternal assistance" to defend socialist gains in Ethiopia and South Yemen. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was justified by the Kremlin on the basis of a treaty with wording much more vague than those concluded in the Red Sea basin. For text of Soviet-Czechoslovakian Treaty see Soviet News n. 5542 (12 May 1970), p. 67. For Soviet-Afghan Treaty see FBIS South Asia, 6 December 1978, p. J-10.

⁷U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Economic and Military Assistance Programs in Africa,
Hearings before the Sub-Committee on Africa. 96th Cong.,
1st sess., 1979, pp. 137-138.

⁸This fact was relayed by a very reliable source who
made the discovery during discussions with a senior official
in the EEC. According to this official, substantial aid to
Ethiopia was not the result of a conscious political
decision.

⁹New York Times, 19 December 1979.

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